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ILLUSTRATIONS OF SCRIPTURE

GEOGRAPHY



Ford of the River Kishon, — Bay of Acre



ILLUSTRATIONS OF SCRIPTURE,

FROM THE

GEOGRAPHY, NATURAL HISTORY, AND MANNERS
AND CUSTOMS OF THE EAST:

BY THE LATE

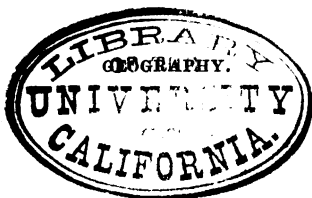
PROFESSOR GEORGE PAXTON, D.D.,
OF EDINBURGH.

THIRD EDITION,

REVISED AND GREATLY ENLARGED BY THE

REV. ROBERT JAMIESON,

MINISTER OF CURRIE, AUTHOR OF 'EASTERN MANNERS ILLUSTRATIVE
OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES,' ETC.



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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
EDITOR'S PREFACE,	5
AUTHOR'S PREFACE,	13
BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR,	21
INTRODUCTION,	39

CHAPTER I.

Garden of Eden. Land of Nod. City of Enoch,	43
---	----

6

CHAPTER II.

The mountains of Ararat, upon which the ark rested,	63
---	----

CHAPTER III.

The land of Shinar, and the city and tower of Babel,	80
--	----

CHAPTER IV.

Of the dispersion of mankind. Settlements of Japhet, Shem, and Ham,	97
--	----

CHAPTER V.

Of the conquests and kingdom of Nimrod. Babylon, Nineveh,	133
---	-----

CHAPTER VI.

Chaldea,	155
--------------------	-----

SUPPLEMENTARY OBSERVATIONS ON,—

Assyria, Chaldea, and Mesopotamia,	159
Persia,	174
Media,	187
Egypt,	190
Arabia,	240

CHAPTER VII.

PALESTINE,	264
Physical geography,	265
Mountains,	271
Valleys,	331
Lakes,	343
Rivers,	368
Climate and weather,	382
General fertility,	427
Original inhabitants,	440
Boundaries,	450
Political divisions,—	
Division on the conquest of Joshua,	452
Division during the administration of Solomon,	483
Division in the reign of Rehoboam,	484
Division in the time of our Lord,	486
COUNTRIES ON THE BORDERS OF PALESTINE,	503
Philistia,	510
Idumea or Edom,	513
Ammon,	515
Moab,	516
Midian,	518
Phœnicia,	519
COUNTRIES DISTANT FROM PALESTINE MENTIONED IN THE	
NEW TESTAMENT,—	
Asia Minor,	526
Macedonia,	527
Achaia,	527
Islands in the Archipelago,	527
Illyricum,	527
Italy,	527
Islands in the Mediterranean,	528
Spain,	528
Æthiopia,	528
Parthia,	528
Scythia,	528

INDEX OF SUBJECTS,	529
------------------------------	-----

INDEX OF PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE,	545
---	-----

EDITOR'S PREFACE.

To the friends of the Bible, no apology is requisite for giving to the public a work which is intended to illustrate the meaning, and unfold the beauties, of the sacred volume. Every adventurer into that important field of research,—whether he supplies new facts, and strikes out new lights of his own, or merely exhibits the ancient lore of his predecessors in a form and style more adapted to the circumstances of the present age, must be hailed with encouragement as a contributor to the stock of general knowledge. The readers of religious works in the present day happily constitute a large and numerous body among all ranks of society, and of all degrees of refinement, who require their several wants to be supplied, and their varied tastes to be gratified; and, consequently, scarcely any work can issue from the press under the care of a sound and judicious writer, which will not commend itself to some of these classes, and render service to the cause of divine truth.

If, in these circumstances, there is no occasion to

apologize for introducing a new work to the notice of the public, there is still less need of apology for the republication of one which is well known, and which has long maintained its reputation as a book of acknowledged merit. The 'ILLUSTRATIONS' of Dr PAXTON, at their first appearance, met with so favourable a reception from reviewers of all denominations, that they at once assumed their place among our standard works on sacred literature; and although during the twenty years that have elapsed since that time, large impressions have been entirely sold off, the frequent demands that have been made for them, while they show that they are still held in as great estimation as ever, urgently called for a new issue of the work.

In proposing to supply this desideratum, the Publishers felt that some alterations, both on the size and contents of the book, were become indispensably necessary. Originally designed for the use of students in theology, it was published in a form that might accord with the erudite and portly volumes that usually adorn the library of a divine. But as it is possessed of an essentially popular character—as it is distinguished in an eminent degree by conveying a mass of most useful and important instruction in a simple and attractive style, and moreover pervaded by a pure and fervid strain of evangelical sentiment,—it has been thought that a great boon would be conferred by bringing it within the reach of the religious public at large; and accordingly the new issue has been got up in a cheap,

neat, and portable form, such as, while the work may still accomplish its original design in being useful to the professional student, may fit it at the same time to rank among the ornaments of a drawing-room table, and be conveniently read by ordinary Christians.

On the interior of the book it was judged proper that still more important changes should be made ; and, accordingly, while the original composition of the author has been left untouched, and is in every respect the same as it came from his hands, a vast quantity of additional matter has been introduced. Thus, in the first division, which was the most imperfect and unsatisfactory part of the work in preceding editions, not only is the fullest information given on the physical and political GEOGRAPHY of Palestine, but a copious outline is added of all that is most necessary and important in the geography of the countries bordering upon the Holy Land, as well as of all which were in any way connected with the chequered fortunes of the chosen people. The advantage of such a full and accurate guide-book must be obvious ; for history must be always imperfectly understood,—must, indeed, be a confused and uninteresting record of facts,—unless it is accompanied with an intimate knowledge of the relative distance and situation of the countries and places that occur in the course of the narrative ; and as this remark is equally applicable to sacred as to profane history, a volume which describes all the principal and most celebrated localities where the scene of the inspired story is laid, must form a useful and in-

dispensable introduction to the intelligent and profitable reading of the Bible.

The second part of the work, which comprises NATURAL HISTORY, has been enriched far beyond what the most ardent lovers of sacred literature could, a short while ago, have expected to be attainable. In no branch of the Illustrations of Scripture was an increase of knowledge more wanted. So low and imperfect, indeed, was the acquaintance of Europeans with the physical productions of Palestine, and the adjacent countries, that little more than twenty years ago, Dr A. Clarke and others, pronounced it almost hopeless to obtain a full and accurate description of the Natural History of the Bible. But circumstances unanticipated at that time,—the great and unprecedented increase of travellers in the Holy Land, which has now become a fashionable tour,—the late war in Syria, which carried thither several well-educated British officers, who, in the intervals of military toil, rambled over the country in pursuit of game and adventures,—above all, the establishment of resident missionaries, deeply interested in the study of Scripture, and possessed, by their knowledge of the language, and their permanent intercourse with the people, of unwonted facilities for becoming familiar with the physical peculiarities of that part of the world, have contributed both to extend and correct our knowledge of the Botany and Zoology of the sacred volume, far beyond the state in which it was in the days of Dr PAXTON'S authorship.

The same circumstances, by leading Europeans to

intermingle with the natives in scenes of private and domestic life, have made us greatly more familiar with the Oriental style of sentiment and language, and, consequently, thrown much new and interesting light on their manners and customs. These, besides the interest that intrinsically attaches to habits so widely different from the European standard, supply a most fertile source of Illustrations of Scripture; and although it is quite possible for a lively imagination to strain such analogies, and to fancy allusions, in the works of the sacred writers, to Oriental customs, which a severe criticism may reject, yet the obvious and undoubted references by the inspired penmen to these peculiarities, are so numerous and so frequent, as to remind their readers, in almost every page, of the oriental origin and cast of the Bible. The prevalence amongst living people of a system of customs and observances, so exactly corresponding with those which characterized the remote age of the patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, naturally attracting much attention, has been described more or less by every traveller, with a minuteness of detail, evincing the great pleasure and interest felt in the coincidence; and hence the journals, even of the most secular and sceptical, abound with little incidents and traits of manners, which, like the golden pebbles on the sands of Pactolus, every now and then catch the eye, and reward the diligence, of the persevering searcher. From these pure and direct sources of information, the number and variety of which it would not be easy to specify, the 'ILLUSTRATIONS OF MANNERS AND CUSTOMS' have

been collected ; and the two volumes which are dedicated to this subject, embracing every particular connected with private, domestic, and social life, may with truth be said to comprise a fund of information of the greatest utility to every student of the Bible ; and the more valuable, that the progress of events seems to point to a period not very distant, when much of the venerable simplicity of oriental habits will disappear. The use of fire-arms,—the introduction of the science and arts of the west,—the establishment of stage-coaches and cafès for the accommodation of passengers through the desert,—have already so completely undermined the hereditary permanence of oriental usages, that they may be reasonably regarded as the precursors of much greater changes ; so that while the extended communication between Europe and the countries of the Levant, must of necessity increase our acquaintance with the Geography and Natural History of the East, its characteristic Manners, as a source of illustration on the literature and authenticity of the Scriptures, may be expected ere long to live only in the pages of the historian and the antiquary.

The contributions of the Editor, in all the three departments of the work, have been considerable ; having for many years been a gleaner in this captivating field of study, he has been enabled to introduce all the most important observations and researches that have been communicated to the world, either in books of travels or the transactions of literary societies for the last twenty years, and has thus imparted to the new

issue a rich variety and copiousness of illustration, that must render it greatly superior in value and interest to the former editions. The matter thus added is distinguished in the text by brackets, and in the notes by the word 'Editor.'

It is necessary to state, by way of explanation, that it has been found impossible, in the volume of Geography, to maintain a uniform orthography, in every case, of the names of places; for different travellers have adopted a different mode of spelling; and, consequently, in passages quoted from their writings, the language of each author has been retained. But in the few instances of this description, the difference is so very slight, that it is impossible the reader can mistake the place described.

To this new Edition, a brief Memoir of the Author is prefixed, from the pen of his venerable friend Dr MITCHELL of Glasgow.

In conclusion, the Editor has only to add, that he deems it a high honour to have his name associated, in this publication, with that of a man who first inspired him, at an early age, with a taste for the study of Eastern History and Manners in connexion with the Scriptures,—on whose fervid and impressive eloquence in the pulpit he has often hung with delight,—and whose personal character and useful labours, will make him long be remembered with reverence and gratitude, as 'a father in Israel.'

MANSE OF CURRIE, *November 4, 1842.*



AUTHOR'S PREFACE

TO

THE FIRST EDITION.

THE present times are happily distinguished by an uncommon attention to the Holy Scriptures. By the unprecedented exertions of the religious public, this inestimable gift of Heaven, which has brought life and immortality to light, is circulated far and wide among the nations; and the day seems to be rapidly approaching, when every people and every tribe shall read in their own language the wonderful works of God. The object is worthy of even greater exertions than have yet been made, and of a much larger expense than has yet been incurred; for the Scriptures are the power of God and the wisdom of God, to the salvation of perishing sinners. They present the most sublime and instructive subjects of contemplation to the human mind; they restrain the angry and impetuous passions, which agitate the bosom of man, and too frequently break forth in deeds of shame; they purify his desires and affections; they expand and invigorate his faculties; they elevate and enlarge his views; and wherever they come, wherever their voice is heard and their authority acknowledged, they rescue from a state of

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ignorance and barbarity, vice and profligacy; they humanize the heart, and adorn the life; they form the strongest and sweetest bond of civil society, and open the purest and most abundant sources of individual and public happiness. To what is to be ascribed the remarkable difference between the wisest, the most learned and polished nations of antiquity, and the communities of modern Europe among whom the Scriptures are allowed to circulate freely? Is it, as many contend, to the instruction and influence of a more enlightened and efficacious philosophy; or to the unobserved, but powerful energy of the divine word? An impartial and intelligent observer will be at no loss to determine. Philosophy herself has been indebted to Revelation for much the greater part of her wisdom and refinement; she has detected many of her principal errors by the light of divine truth; has relinquished her prejudices and follies by its secret influence; and has borrowed from it her wisest lessons, her most powerful motives, and her brightest and most elevated views. To this, and not to any power of her own, must be referred the superior and more salutary impressions which she produces in modern times.

But the great and important amelioration in the sentiments and conduct of civil society, is the least part of the benefit which the Scriptures bestow. They discover the real-character of God, and of his rational creature, man; they describe the state of sin and misery into which we have fallen, and the wonderful method which infinite wisdom has contrived for our deliverance—the obedience and death of the Son of God. The change which they produce in the unrenewed mind, is of incalculable value and of eternal

duration; it cannot be described with more force and propriety than in the words of inspiration itself: —‘The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.’ While the most extensive views of moral science are confined to the narrow span of human life, the word of God draws aside the veil which conceals a future state, and unfolds the final destinies of man; it points our hopes to enjoyments beyond the grave, commensurate with the vast desires and capacities of the glorified spirit, and durable as the nature and perfections of the Eternal; and our fears, to sufferings equally intense and permanent.

A treasure so precious, surely possesses a strong claim to the affectionate and solicitous attention of mankind, and imposes a duty on all who enjoy it, to facilitate its acceptance in their respective stations, and by all the means in their power, and to secure to themselves and others, the numerous and important blessings which it contains. The call of duty has not been heard in vain; men of great capacity and deep research, have investigated, with complete success, the claims of the Scriptures to a divine origin, and exhibited in the most satisfactory manner the grounds upon which they rest; patient and learned expositors have laboured to ascertain and illustrate the meaning, and acute critics to dissipate the obscurity which hangs over some parts of the sacred text. But something more was required, fully to elucidate the sense, and display the incomparable accuracy, force, and beauty of the inspired writings;—an accu-

rate knowledge of the natural phenomena and moral condition of the East. When the time of the promise drew near, that the earth should be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, he sent forth his agents to visit those remote regions where the scene of our redemption is laid, and collect the necessary information. Animated by the daring spirit of commercial adventure, or prompted by a fearless and romantic curiosity, men of intelligence and observation made their way into every region on which the light of Revelation had shone, and mingled familiarly with almost every people to whom the holy Scriptures had been originally addressed. Whether they were actuated by a principle of hostility or love to the writings of the prophets and apostles, the result of their inquiries, as might be expected, was the same—the statements of inspiration were illustrated and confirmed by their narratives.

But the rich and ample materials which those travellers had collected in their perilous wanderings, were scattered over a multitude of writings in different languages, which the greater part of Christians could neither procure nor understand, and intermixed with remarks and observations on many general subjects, which had no relation to Sacred Literature. Even few Biblical students had leisure to travel over so wide a field, or patience to note the facts and statements which served to illustrate the sacred page. To separate those materials, therefore, from the extraneous matter with which they were encumbered, and to give them a condensed and systematic form, was render a service of no inconsiderable importance to the interests of truth and holiness. Urged by this consideration, various writers, both in our own

country and on the Continent, have, at different times, directed their attention to this department, and favoured the religious world with occasional remarks, or formal treatises of great value. The voluminous works of the learned and indefatigable BOCHART, the Jewish Antiquities of IKENIUS and others, clearly prove how necessary and useful, in the estimation of Foreign divines, are writings of that kind to the Biblical student, and to every person who desires to obtain a full and accurate acquaintance with the records of inspiration. The celebrity which the Observations of HARMER, and the Oriental Customs of BURDER, have recently acquired, leaves no room to doubt, that the friends of religious truth at home entertain the same views. v. 21.

The mind of the writer has been long impressed with the necessity and advantage of applying the physical and moral circumstances of the East, to the exposition of the Scriptures. He is well aware, that this mode of interpretation may be carried too far. A glowing imagination may suggest a relation between some text of Scripture and an oriental custom, where none actually exists; but neither are the other methods of exposition exempt from danger. Critical acumen has but too frequently given a false view of the sacred text. It is readily granted, that an oriental phenomenon or custom, ought not to invade the province of genuine criticism, abridge her legitimate rights, and supersede the due exercise of her powers. It is only when she fails to elicit the meaning of a passage by the usual methods, or when some obscurity remains after all her exertions, which she is unable to remove, that the Biblical student may call for their assistance. They have a right to decide, vid

only when the other is mute, and to perfect what the other has been compelled to leave unfinished. When oriental circumstances are kept within their proper sphere, and applied with judgment and caution, it is humbly conceived, they may be of great utility in expounding the holy Scriptures.

In this conviction, the Author commenced a series of Lectures on the subject, to the Theological students under his charge, without the most remote idea of submitting them to the eye of the public. The rapid increase of the Class, together with the number and variety of the exercises required by the General Synod from their students every session, soon rendered it inconvenient to continue them; and it occurred to him, that in this form, his prelections might still be useful to those for whom they were originally composed, and not unacceptable to the friends of the Bible in general.

From the well-earned fame of his predecessors in this department of sacred literature, particularly of Mr HARMER and Mr BURDER, he feels not the least inclination to detract; on the contrary, he rejoices in their success, and in the approbation which their writings have obtained from a discerning public. Much, however, as their learning and industry have accomplished, he still thought the subject was not exhausted, and that a better plan than either of them had followed, might be adopted. He has freely availed himself of their labours; but not, he trusts, in a slavish manner. All the authorities quoted, as well by these writers, as by Mr TAYLOR, in his edition of CALMET, which he had access to, have been carefully examined, besides a number of works which they have overlooked, or which have been published since

they wrote. Claiming the same right to think for himself which he cordially allows to his neighbour, the writer has expressed his opinions freely, even when they happened to differ from their sentiments; but he has never, to his knowledge, departed from the language of candour and respect.

The only object which the Author proposed to himself in composing this work, was to illustrate the holy Scriptures; he has therefore uniformly and studiously rejected every particular in Oriental Geography, Natural History, Customs, and Manners, how curious and interesting soever, that was not subservient to his design. His statements in all the three divisions, may be deemed very defective; and had he proposed to give a complete view of these important subjects, they would certainly have been so; but they are sufficiently complete for his purpose. Nor did his plan admit of describing every place, or plant, or custom, whose name occurs, or to which allusion is made by the sacred writers; it embraced those only that are connected with the exposition of some important passage, or that contribute to the general elucidation of the Scriptures. This will account for the numerous omissions, particularly under the heads of Geography and Natural History, which the intelligent reader will observe in his progress.

AUTHOR'S ADVERTISEMENT

TO

THE SECOND EDITION.

THE testimonies of public and private approbation, with which the first impression of this work was received, encouraged the Author to commence, soon after its appearance, his preparations for a new and improved edition. With this view he engaged in an extensive course of classical and historical reading, and not only re-examined the sources from which he had formerly drawn his materials, but also perused many valuable works from the pen of modern historians and travellers, which he had not an opportunity of seeing before. He has thus been enabled to confirm his former statements, and enrich his pages with much new and instructive matter.

BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR,

BY THE

REV. JOHN MITCHELL, D.D., S.T.P., GLASGOW.

WHEN a person sits down to peruse a book, it is natural for him to desire some information concerning the character and history of its author. And this intelligence is not only desirable but useful. For it will shed light upon the pages of the work ; impart additional interest to its perusal ; furnish a key for expounding the language and sentiments of the writer ; and aid in estimating the weight of his authority, and the value of his opinions.

Such information is particularly interesting when it relates to one who has attained celebrity by his abilities, his acquirements, and his writings ; since, from the perusal of his memoirs, we may derive invaluable lessons for the conduct of study, and of life. Introduced into the interior of his history, we shall be enabled to trace some of the steps by which he rose to eminence ; or warned by his failures (if such be recorded) we shall be taught to avoid the causes which produced them, while in both ways we may be better prepared to select, and to improve, the true means of attaining proficiency, and stimulated, as well as aided, in our laudable

attempts to follow him in the path which leads on to moral and intellectual excellence. Such, besides the exhibition of wisdom and worth which must be always interesting, are some of the advantages to be derived from the biographies of the enlightened and the good; and such are some of the reasons which have induced the friends of the esteemed Author of the 'Scripture Illustrations' to desire that a succinct Memoir of his life should accompany this his chief work; the more especially as no account of him, in any extended form, has been given to the public. With this view the following reminiscences, supplied by personal recollections, or drawn from authentic sources, may be somewhat gratifying and useful to the reader. Although sometimes he must bear in mind that the life of a village-pastor (the station which Dr Paxton held for a great part of his ministry) ordinarily furnishes but few incidents of public interest; that his appropriate memorials are to be derived from his ministrations in the sanctuary, around the family hearth, and at the beds of sickness and death; or from the secret aspirations of the closet;—and that such memorials are in themselves fugitive, and seldom committed to any earthly record.

Compiled at the request of relatives, the following brief biography is laid, as a small monumental tablet, upon the tomb of one who was esteemed in life, and cannot be forgotten though dead, by a brother who enjoyed with him an abiding friendship during his whole ministerial course, and who cherishes the hope of renewed, and yet more hallowed, association with him in the better world.

The subject of this Memoir was born on the 2d of April 1762, at Dalgowry, a hamlet in the parish of Bolton, East Lothian. He was the eldest son of William Paxton and Jean Milne, both worthy and pious persons. The former was a joiner or house-carpenter, skilful in his trade, and much respected in his neighbourhood. Both died before their son; yet not till they had enjoyed the inexpressible satisfaction of seeing him enter the ministry, and attain a high standing, and much acceptance, in the Secession Church, of which they were members.

His parents did not remain long on the scene of his nati-

vity ; for, soon after that event, they removed first to Melrose, and thence to Makerston, in the neighbourhood of Kelso. The human mind is so constituted as to yield itself readily, especially in early life, to the impressions of particular scenes. The localities in the vicinity of both these villages are highly picturesque ; and there can hardly be a doubt, that the subject of this memoir imbibed, from the circumstances with which he was surrounded in his younger years, that passion for natural scenery, those sensitive feelings, and that liveliness of imagination, for which he was afterwards distinguished. Other circumstances, doubtless, contributed to the same general effect. This district was the great field of those border wars, and patriotic exploits, which were often recited at the hearths of its peasantry, and were well calculated to fire a young and susceptible mind with admiration of the great in action, and love of the marvellous in incident. And, while its braes and dells had been, from the earliest times of the Secession, the scenes of holy resort for the celebration of sacramental solemnities, as well as for the more general ministrations of religion, to which he would naturally be led by his pious parents ; it may well be supposed that such attendance, combining with the first and strongest prepossessions of his childhood and youth, would inspire an ardent attachment to the principles of civil and religious liberty, and to the cause of the Secession, which he is known to have early espoused, and of which he was, throughout life, the strenuous advocate.

His parents continued to reside some considerable time at Makerston, the seat of Sir Hay M'Dougal, Colonel of the Scots Greys, and a veteran soldier, who had distinguished himself by his bravery, in the wars on the continent. This gallant and honourable gentleman showed much kindness to the Paxton family, and took a particular interest in young George. Under his eye, and encouraged by his attentions, the youth received his English education (which at that time was very simple and circumscribed), most probably at the parish school of Makerston. At Kelso, however, the neighbouring town, he was taught Latin, and acquired a knowledge of Greek ; the former somewhat perfectly, the latter only in scanty measure, as then was, and indeed still is, the case in almost all schools in rural districts. The family fireside was

the chief scene of other and higher instructions ; and there cannot be a doubt, considering the character of his parents, that this interesting child, who afterwards became ' mighty in the Scriptures,' owed his knowledge of the book of God, and of ' the faith once delivered to the saints,' greatly to their tuition. How wise and excellent is this arrangement,—conformable at once to the constitution of nature, and to the scheme of divine grace ! How great and almost irreparable is the loss sustained by those who enjoy it not ; and how well did this domestic training prepare the subject of our memoir, in many ways, for the efficient and acceptable discharge of the duties of his future ministry !

The ministry of the gospel was not, however, from the first, the destination of George. His father had designed that he should follow his own occupation ; but, after some trial, it was found that his propensities were adverse to its prosecution, and his father prudently and kindly gave way. It is indeed unwise, if it be not unjust, to thwart the strong bias of the youthful spirit in such matters ; for the worst consequences, even to the moral man, frequently ensue from such coercion : not to speak of the unhappiness, as well as want of success, which are almost always the certain result. There may be folly, there may be caprice, in the predilections of the child or the youth ; but a decided preference for a particular calling is usually the indication of nature, announcing the bent of talent, the inclination of spirit, and the constitutional aptitude for comparative excellence.

Yet, in the case before us, it does not appear that there were any very strong, or marked, impulses of soul toward the sacred vocation. Solomon has told us, that ' childhood and youth are vanity ;' and we hazard nothing in presuming, that young George, by the frowardness of his earliest tempers, and the pranks of his boyish years, would show that he inherited the nature common to man. Nor can there be great danger of mistake in supposing, that he would then be distinguished by a volatility of mind, which arose out of the very temperament of his constitution, as well as by that warmth of affection, and independence of spirit, which characterized his later years. His mother has been heard to state, that she found it ' difficult to fix his mind upon religious subjects ;'

but it is not easy to satisfy a pious mother, in the measure of attention given to divine things, and especially to sacred duties, by a son whom she tenderly loves, and 'for whom she travails as in birth again until Christ be formed in him : ' and we ought not to draw very large inferences from such casual complaints.

During this juvenile period, so far as we have heard, no particular incident occurred, so extraordinary, or so interesting, as to require to be specially noticed in these annals, except (if indeed incident it may be called) that he contracted a tender regard for one of his school companions and playmates, Miss Elizabeth Armstrong, daughter of Mr Armstrong, manufacturer in Kelso, which was reciprocated by her,—was thenceforward mutually cherished,—grew up with their growth,—was matured in after life,—and at last formed the bond of the conjugal connexion, and became the bliss of future years. She approved herself a person of excellent endowments, and amiable temper, heightened and adorned by piety.

At length, as the course of his education at the grammar-school became complete, the period arrived when he should pass on to college. While this was to him, no doubt, a joyful and interesting era, it was to his parents, we may believe, one of no small anxiety. In proportion to their affection, their piety, and their knowledge of human life and manners, it would be so. For their beloved son was about to quit the paternal home, to be from under their eye and their care for a long season, and to go far from them to mingle with strangers in a great city, where temptations, both to his morals and his religious principles, as they could not but have heard, greatly abounded. Besides, they were not in affluent circumstances, and the expense of education, at a distance from home, and in a university, was more than they could well afford. By the interest of the Laird of Makerston, however, George obtained a small bursary ; and the rest, a rigid economy at home would cheerfully supply, at least for some time. Perhaps, among all our population, there is no class of persons more deserving of admiration and eulogy, in forwarding the collegiate education of their children with a view to the ministry, than the pious peasantry and artizans of Scotland, who content themselves with very hard fare and plain attire to accomplish this object, upon

which their hearts are greatly set, and who often, like Elkanah and Hannah, early devote their Samuel to God, for the service of the sanctuary.

It was in the eighteenth or nineteenth year of his age, that George Paxton entered the university of Edinburgh. His first class was the Greek, having overstepped the Latin, as was very customary in these times ; but he passed in regular succession through all the rest, though not perhaps in continuous order. He did not, however, take out a degree, which was then very seldom done ; but there can be no doubt, from his spirit, that he would apply himself both intensely and assiduously to his studies ; while there can be as little doubt, considering his talents, that he would make more than common proficiency in his literary labours. The professors under whom he studied, Hill, Dalziel, Bruce, Ferguson, Stuart, Robison, were able and celebrated in their several departments ; so that he enjoyed every advantage which the times could furnish for the acquisition of learning.

Having finished his course at college, he went to Alloa, like the other young men of the same church, to study divinity, under the Rev. William Moncrieff. There he came within the more powerful attractions of his great object ; and we may well conceive, from the piety and ardour of his mind, that he would yield himself to them with the full bent of his soul. Doctrinal and polemical theology, as we might expect from the state of religious society, and from the controversies of the times, was then chiefly taught and studied. Accordingly, while Mr Paxton was deeply imbued with the faith of gospel truth, he was also, as we know, an instructed theologian, and a firm Seceder. Thus, was he silently preparing, though he could not anticipate the result, for the high and responsible situation which he was afterwards called to fill.

In the twenty-sixth year of his age, on the 18th of March 1788, Mr Paxton was licensed, by the Associate Presbytery of Edinburgh, to preach ' the everlasting gospel ; ' and no sooner did he begin his public labours, than he acquired very great popularity. Indeed, not only then, but long after, even to the close of his ministry, and until disease had impaired his strength, and incapacitated him for his former preparations and exertions, he continued to be a distinguished favourite with the

religious public ; insomuch that none perhaps was superior, few indeed equal, to him in acceptance. The writer of this memoir has seen large and crowded congregations hanging upon his lips, with breathless attention, during a long discourse, amid all the annoyances arising within doors from wearied bodies, late hours, and a heated church ; or all the distractions presented without at week-day sermons, either by a noisy village population, or the attractions of a wide and splendid scene spread out before the view from the place of meeting. Nor could any one who heard him, especially any judicious and reflecting person, be surprised at the effect. His aspect was animated, ardent, solemn, in a high degree. His voice was clear, forcible, and impressive, without being harsh, and without losing its sweetness. His elocution was prompt and mellifluous ; the most distinct, and, at the same time, the most rapid. His language was simple, pointed, and perspicuous, though highly figurative. His sentiments were scriptural, judicious, original, inclining occasionally to the metaphysical ; but, especially amid the rapidity of extemporaneous utterance, not always capable of sustaining that rigid criticism which he might otherwise have invited. Such was the flow of his utterance, that it would have been hypercritical, and altogether unreasonable, to have subjected his most characteristic efforts to such an ordeal. His discourses, in their general structure and character, though didactic and somewhat diffuse, were strikingly illustrative, and pointedly practical. Indeed, no one, who has not seen, or marked, the effect of natural and fervent eloquence, can, without difficulty, conceive the powerful impression of his address, or believe the anecdotes that might be related concerning its occasional influence. He arrested his audience with delight. In listening to him, they forgot the lapse of time, even though the hour was late, and several of them had far to travel under night.

A preacher of such overpowering eloquence, in a church where popular election is the sign of acceptance and the initiative of induction to the sacred office, could not remain long without an invitation to a particular charge. Within a short space, and in rapid succession, he received no fewer than three calls, from congregations in different parts of the country, Greenlaw, Craigend, and the united congregations of Kil-

maurs and Stewarton. According to the ecclesiastical arrangements of that period, the competition was referred for decision to the Synod, which met in the end of April 1789, and was determined in favour of the last of the three. Whether Mr Paxton had any preference the writer does not remember to have heard ; but, at that period, if any was entertained by the preacher, he, in the spirit of entire devotedness, never ultroneously expressed it, and the Court, of purpose, never inquired what might be his choice or his leanings.

Having obtained, after an eager competition, the man of their choice, the united congregations of Stewarton and Kilmaurs had the happiness of seeing him settled among them, on 12th August 1789. Soon after, he took up his abode at Stewarton and immediately began to apply himself, with intense vigour, to his studies, and to his other ministerial duties. Next year he was united in marriage to the amiable and accomplished object of his early attachment. Conjugal happiness cheered his incessant labours, and Providence enriched him, in the course of ten years, with the gift of two sons and three daughters. But earthly felicity, of the purest and highest order, is precarious, and liable, not only to pain, but to privation. The health of Mrs Paxton, during the course of this period, became infirm ; of his children, two, a son and a daughter, died in infancy ; and, at length, his endeared spouse was also taken away, leaving him to deplore her loss, and to sustain in widowhood the toils of an arduous ministry, and withal the pangs of a severe and long-continued disease. His other son, George, grew up to manhood ; studied first for the pulpit, then for the practice of medicine ; went out to India, where he acquired considerable reputation, and, what was more satisfactory to his father's mind, gave decided proofs of vital religion. In that inhospitable climate, the grave of so many of our aspiring and promising compatriots, he died, while he might be considered as yet in the prime of life, leaving behind him a widow, who is still alive, and a son, who, to the great grief of his grandfather, perished on the way homeward to his care and to his bosom. His two daughters still survive, having both distinguished themselves by eminent talents directed to the education of the young : Jane, spouse of the Rev. J. More, minister of the United Associate Congregation of Cairneyhill, near

Dunfermline ; and Margaret, widow of the late Rev. William Young, A. M., minister of the United Associate congregation, Berwick.

The two congregations of Stewarton and Kilmaurs, having, in the course of a few years increased so much, that each of itself could maintain a minister, and Mr Paxton having found the duties of a double charge too onerous, solicited the presbytery to dissolve his relation to the people of Stewarton, leaving him entirely to the congregation of Kilmaurs. This was done ; and he continued, for several years, amid the loss of children and in widowhood, to prosecute his labours among them with exemplary zeal and encouraging success, till he was seized with bodily affliction, which issued in a deep hepatic malady. It laid him aside from his official labours for about seven years. During this long period of suffering and seclusion, to beguile the tedious hours, and relieve his mind in part from its load of grief and of care, he loved to recal the scenes and vicissitudes of his early life, and to commit them to verse ; a natural and elegant recourse which originated a volume of poems, to be afterwards noticed. Amid his sad suspension from duties, on which his heart was set, and in which he was so well qualified to do very great good, and especially at one crisis when he was exceedingly exhausted by fever, he had, what could not fail to console in a high degree his susceptible mind, abundant proof of the kindness of his people, of the sympathy of his brethren, and of the friendship of others, even of comparative strangers. Among these, the ardent and chivalrous generosity of a medical gentleman, Dr Adair of Ayr, specially deserves to be commemorated. Though retired from practice, far advanced in life (being above seventy years of age), and himself infirm, he was no sooner apprized, by the late Dr Stevenson, Mr Paxton's friend and brother, of his perilous state, and that no other physician could be found, than he voluntarily offered to go to his assistance, and instantly set out, though it was a severe night in winter, journeyed with zealous speed to Kilmaurs, and afterwards by the most watchful and unwearied, almost unintermitting, attention for eight successive days and nights, strove to subdue the disease. God was pleased signally to bless his generous exertions. He had the happiness of seeing his interesting patient rescued from the grave, and restored to a state of convales-

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cence, by his skilful and opportune applications. And very low had the sufferer been reduced ; so low, indeed, that his friends were afraid to inform him of the death of a beloved child, which had happened at this crisis, lest it should extinguish the feeble flame, which hung flickering in its socket, and apparently ready to expire. For the purpose of reducing the organic disease in the liver, an issue from his side was kept open by means of a seton. At length, a result, rare in the annals of medicine, ensued : a hard nucleus protruded from the wound, and his health gradually improved.

Though recovered to a certain degree of health, he yet never shook off the deep-seated disease entirely, nor resumed his wonted energy. It became therefore evident, that the discharge of the duties of his pastoral office, in the way he was wont to discharge them,—especially long and vehement speaking in public,—would be too much for his impaired constitution, and that some other occupation, less laborious, must be resorted to, if his valuable life and labours were to be prolonged.

About this time, the General Associate Synod met to fill the chair of their Theological Institution anew. The venerable, excellent, and erudite, Mr Archibald Bruce, their Professor of Divinity, dissatisfied with certain changes which had been made in the public profession and authoritative documents of the body, had conscientiously assumed a position which brought him into collision with the Courts, and seemed incompatible with his retaining the tuition of the future ministers of the church ; and Mr Paxton was chosen to be his successor. At the same time, the whole scheme of Theological instruction was brought under review, and it was resolved, as soon as means should be obtained, to have an additional professorship instituted, very similar to that which has since been appointed by the United Associate Synod, under the general designation of ‘ Biblical Literature.’ Meanwhile, in order that the improvement of the actual system of education might be promoted, and the new Professor give himself wholly ‘ to his work,’ he was loosed from his charge ; assigned a suitable salary ; translated to Edinburgh ; appointed, after the term of his engagement at the hall with his proper divinity class, to teach Hebrew to such students of the body as might devote themselves to the study, and, generally, to superintend

the university education of those who had it in view to become ministers of the Word. All this was accomplished; and, without entering here into any detail of arrangements, which were as efficient as circumstances would permit, we may say, that Professor Paxton gave himself unweariedly to personal study and to his proper work, and, by his abilities, his diligence, his devotional spirit and dignity, as well as affability, secured the ardent attachment of his pupils; inasmuch that, to this day, he is remembered by them with deep interest, and spoken of with affectionate veneration.

A few years after his removal to Edinburgh, he entered a second time into the married state. The object of his choice being Miss Margaret Johnstone, daughter of a respectable farmer in Berwickshire, a pious and devoted lady, whose kindly care and unwearied attentions contributed eminently to cheer the evening of his life. She still survives, respected and beloved by his children and relatives.

But there are vicissitudes incident to all human affairs, and the above happy state of things, in relation to his connexion with the General Associate Synod, was not destined to last always. When the union between the two larger portions of the Secession began to be discussed, Professor Paxton felt dissatisfied with some portions of the Basis, and opposed himself strenuously to the consummation of the measure. This led to another change; and, having concurred with a minority of the Synod, who protested and stood apart when the union was completed, he felt it to be his duty a few months afterwards to give up all connexion with the United Associate Synod; and, at the request of a number of people who were dissatisfied with the recently formed union, to commence dispensing divine ordinances to them. Soon a very considerable congregation was collected, of which he ultimately became the pastor. Having ministered, at first, in a vacant chapel adjoining the Grassmarket, and under the Castle-hill; when this was found too small, as well as otherwise inconvenient, a new church was built for him in Infirmary Street, which was soon well filled. After his separation from the larger section of his brethren, he continued to act as Professor of Divinity to those who had protested against the union, and formed themselves into a separate body. When, not long afterwards, a conjunction was effected betwixt them and

their brethren of the Constitutional Presbytery, to which the learned and illustrious Dr M'Crie belonged, he still held the same situation in that new connexion, denominated the Associate Synod of Original Seceders.

Before entering into this new, and, though not large, yet respectable body, he had espoused the cause of National Establishments in religion; and, when the question became keenly agitated, continued to defend such institutions warmly, though still, like Dr M'Crie, retaining his Secessional principles, and contending earnestly for ecclesiastical purity in all its forms and relations. Sometime afterwards, he received the honorary title of D. D. from the University of St Andrews; a distinction which, it is said, he owed, next to his own merit, to the liberality of the professor of oriental languages in that very ancient seat of Scottish learning.

But he had now advanced in life, and the time was drawing nigh when these honours could not be long worn, nor could the possessor of them continue to render effective service to that church, of which he was so active and so eminent a minister and professor. As frequently happens in such cases, the visitation which incapacitated him for his work was sudden and unexpected. In the pulpit of his own church, and during the time of public ministration, he was smitten with the first stroke of that fell disease, which impaired sensibly both his corporeal and intellectual energies, and which, though he lived a few years after, never remitted its enervating grasp and its withering influence till it had prostrated him in the dust. All those remedies which the best skill could suggest were tried; but though, occasionally, the symptoms appeared to be abated, yet no effort or medicine proved of permanent benefit, or essential avail. Still, still, '*hæsit lateri lethalis arundo.*' His friends would gladly have persuaded themselves that it was some other malady than apoplexy; but it had stamped its signature upon his constitution too broadly and too deeply to be either erased or mistaken;—his able physician, from the beginning, treated it as such; and he himself, we believe, aware of its character, and feeling its paralyzing influence, never allowed himself to hope for full recovery. But though he foresaw, he did not dread, the issue. He knew in whom he had believed; and hearing the clock

strike twelve on the last day of the week, he said, 'It is now the commencement of the day of rest, O! that I were at my rest.' Calmly awaiting the arrival of death, he could hardly contemplate him as the king of terrors, or even an unwelcome messenger; and, certainly, not 'as to him armed with a sting,' and inflicting a curse. He was a man of prayer; his studies were conducted amid many invocations; and prayer, which is the first and last exercise of every believer, was his life in living, and his support in dying. His whole conduct and ministry, together with the last scene, and the last day, corresponded beautifully to each other. It was on a Sabbath morning that he took leave of this world, as well as of 'the body of sin and death.' After awakening, he felt himself uneasy. At his request, Mrs Paxton arose to dress, that she might prepare for his rising also. Meanwhile, he continued absorbed in prayer, or entranced in ecstasy; and when she cast an eye upon his couch, he was sitting up in bed; but, upon being laid in a reclining posture, according to a sign which he gave, in a few seconds all was over, and a gleam of heavenly radiance was seen to spread over his placid countenance. It was the *halo* of the setting sun, gilding the top of a high mountain 'with farewell sweet.' 'Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the latter end of that man is peace.' 'The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness, and assurance for ever.'

Thus died, on the 9th of April 1837, in the seventy-fifth year of his age, this man of God, and minister of religion, and president of one of 'The Schools of the Prophets.' The writer of this memoir is fearful of doing him injustice, in attempting to delineate his character; yet early and strong attachment, as well as intimate association, friendship unbroken by party-separation, and intercourse maintained to the last, may be supposed to fit him, in some measure, for the task; and it is hoped that the following portraiture will be approved as faithful by all who knew him intimately.

As a theologian, he was well versed in the Scriptures, which his chief work shows him to have been; particularly acquainted with the writings of the puritan divines; and decidedly of the old school in doctrinal sentiment. As a professor, his prelections indicated diligent research, were carefully prepared, and

clothed in language easy, copious, and forcible. And, as a literary man, he may be justly assigned no mean station in educated and enlightened society. To the discharge of the office of the sacred ministry he brought, from the beginning, a very creditable stock of mental qualifications as well as of preparatory acquisitions. During his incumbency as pastor of a considerable charge, at one time two-fold, and over a people widely scattered, though the variety of his duties, at home and abroad, left him little time for extraneous study, yet he always maintained a respectable acquaintance with the current literature and intelligence of the times. And, after he was released from congregational duties, and possessed the entire command of his time, except during the session of the Hall, and what was spent with the students at college, he applied himself, as far as his health would permit, with vigorous assiduity to the cultivation of learning in several of its walks, especially those which lay in the track of his peculiar vocation, and thus added much to his former attainments. He had not, perhaps, a particular aptitude for antiquarian and historical research, or for profound philosophical and mathematical disquisitions; but he had a taste for biblical study, for general reading, for elegant literature, and for theological proficiency in its several departments.

Besides some ecclesiastical papers which he prepared, and some articles in the *Christian Magazine* which he contributed, few publications were given by him to the world. We indeed recollect only three. The first of these, and his earliest production of this class, was a *Sermon on the Office and Duties of Deacon*, intended to repress a secular and turbulent spirit in the management of pecuniary affairs that had arisen in some congregations at that time, and to recommend the substitution of this class of office-bearers for that of managers. It was written with temper and ability, though it did not acquire great celebrity; and, if it did not produce the full effect designed, it yet, there can be no doubt, contributed to abate the evil which it sought to remedy. The second was a *volume of Miscellaneous Poems*, composed, as has been stated, during his protracted illness; and which, beside two larger pieces, contains others which are shorter and of various classes. This work, it is apprehended, was never widely circulated, nor greatly applauded. Of all literary compositions, the public are perhaps

least indulgent to poems which do not rise above mediocrity, or which are not very high in the scale of excellence ; and we may be permitted to say, that the reception of those of our author, to which we now refer, has, if we mistake not, been beneath their merit. We do not claim for them an award of the highest order ; but their versification, in our apprehension, is sweet and flowing,—the sentiments they embody are correct, not seldom original,—the spirit they breathe is frequently tender or stirring,—and the figures they employ are always apt, and occasionally striking.

But by far his greatest and most laborious work, upon which his reputation as an Author must rest, is his ' ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.' It was composed after he had retired to Edinburgh, and consists of the materials of those lectures which were prepared for his students, and delivered from time to time as a portion of the theological course. Whoever looks into the work, will find that the modest pretensions put forth by the author in the preface are more than borne out ; and the judicious reader will be struck with the variety and extent of research and study which the author must have accomplished. When writings so numerous were to be consulted, it was hardly possible, without loading his pages with an ostentatious profusion of authorities, to quote every one ; and our author has done, what we apprehend is all that in a case of this kind can be reasonably required,—he has quoted, in special instances which might be important or liable to be controverted, the writers to whom he appeals for proof ; and in other cases he has applied to his object with fidelity the various information collected from many sources,—has moulded it in his own manner,—has arranged it in his own order,—and has clothed it in his own style. The work which he has produced is fitted by the mass of varied information which it contains ; the perspicuous, popular, and flowing style in which it is written, and the pious spirit which pervades the whole, peculiarly to gratify the devout mind, and to please the person of logical taste, as well as to render eminent service to the biblical student, when prosecuting his inquiries into the meaning and beauty of Holy Writ.

Two of the qualities to which we have adverted (simplicity and sweetness of style), particularly fitted him as a writer, for

a species of composition not yet mentioned, in which, perhaps, his forte lay,—we mean epistolary writing. His friends are in possession of many communications of this class, which strikingly exemplify the devoted warmth of his affections, and his powers of familiar and interesting correspondence, but which cannot of course be inserted in a sketch so brief. Others are possessed of letters written to them in peculiar circumstances of relative or domestic affliction, exhibiting his sensibility and his aptitude to direct and console. And not a few who were students under him, or prosecuted the ministry with the aid of his friendly counsels, have memorials of his interest and ability to guide their studies ; which, with the remembrance of his prayers and his instructions, they cordially cherish. Thus, being dead, he yet speaketh, and liveth, and will live, in the hearts, the ministrations, and the characters of those whom he benefited.

His character has been already incorporated to a considerable extent with the preceding narrative. But it may be desirable to collect the traits, and present them as a whole before the reader. His eye was penetrating, and the lineaments of his aspect were regular and full of animation. His mien was dignified, but not supercilious. In general society and mixed companies, he was usually grave, rather reserved ; yet, in more private and select association, particularly in a family circle of friends, where he loved to unbend himself, he was facetious, sometimes jocose, though he never aimed at wit. His heart was warm, and his affections abiding ; but, like all persons of powerful feelings, he was susceptible of strong partialities and repugnances. His judgment was ardent and expansive, though liable at times to be unconsciously biassed, in some degree, by prepossessions or prejudices. His imagination was rather copious and sentimental than elevated or creative. His opinions were in general very fixed, but he has been known (and who has not seen cause to do so ?) to alter them very materially in the progress of life and study. In church Courts he occasionally advocated strong measures, but in private life he was bland and conceding, ready to listen to the voice of friendship, and to yield much, where matters of conscience were not involved, to its counsels or its requests. His conduct, in respect of morals, was through-

out life exemplarily prudent, and altogether unimpeachable. He was eminently a man of prayer, and the high estimation in which he was held by his pupils, was greatly enhanced by the warmth and fulness of his devotional addresses at their class meetings. Indeed, religion was his *vocation*. Its personal exercises or public offices were his business and his pleasure. In short, he was a ' Master in Israel ;' and when he died, it might be said, in no mean sense, that a ' Prince and a great man among the children of his people ' had fallen.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF SCRIPTURE.

INTRODUCTION.

THE physical and moral circumstances of the East, in what light soever we view them, have powerful claims on the attention of every liberal and inquisitive mind. Placed under the vertical rays of the sun—illumined and influenced by other constellations than those which adorn our skies—inhabited by races of men, whose external appearance and modes of thinking almost tempt us to consider them as belonging to a different creation,—the oriental regions exhibit a scene equally new and interesting. The great variety of vegetable and animal forms which they present to our notice, so different from those which enrich our fields and tenant our deserts, awaken curiosity and stimulate research. Even the distance to which they are removed from us on the surface of the globe, throws over them a sort of awful obscurity, which deepens the interest we naturally feel in contemplating the works of almighty power, and the productions of human skill and industry.

But those parts of the world are, besides, connected with events of the most extraordinary character, and the most comprehensive influence. The spirit of inspiration directs us to seek within their limits, the native country of the first pair, and the chosen abode

of innocence and peace. In those fertile regions, the grand adversary of the human race accomplished their ruin by the introduction of sin, and endeavoured to countervail the loss of heaven, by establishing his throne of darkness below. It was there Divine Justice commenced the work of judgment on earth, by condemning the serpent to go upon his belly, and feed on dust,—and man, who had weakly suffered himself to be seduced from his duty, to return, after a few years of painful exertion, to the dust from whence he came; while it was there also that Divine Mercy began to unfold the scheme of redemption, which infinite Wisdom had contrived in the counsels of peace before the foundation of the world.

Moreover the East was the cradle of human improvement, the quarter whence knowledge was diffused over the rest of the world, and where the first great efforts of mankind were displayed. The Orientals first displayed the powerful and various energies of the human mind; first cultivated the social affections, and formed themselves into civil communities for their mutual benefit; or listened to the solicitations of the turbulent passions, and engaged in the work of mutual destruction. Placed in the most favourable circumstances for scientific observations, they led the way in the acquisition of knowledge, which at once enlightened and corrupted the mind; and by a diligent and persevering application to the mechanical and liberal arts, ameliorated the condition of the human family, by their numerous and invaluable productions. Almost every district exhibits the memorial of some great exploit; almost every town and village recalls the remembrance of some important or singular occurrence. These are circumstances that can scarcely fail to direct the eye of the man of letters, the student of human nature, and the Christian philanthropist, to the East, with an intensity of interest which no other quarter of the globe can excite.

But another consideration may be mentioned, which, in point of weight and attraction, is not, perhaps, inferior to any of these. In those distant countries, inspired prophets committed to writing the revelations of Heaven, for the instruction and reformation of the human kind. Although supernaturally directed by the Spirit of God, they followed in some degree the bent of their own genius, and the influence of their own taste. They not only wrote in the vernacular language of the country where they lived; but also made use of the terms and modes of speech that were familiar among the people, and suited to persons of every station and capacity, and employed those tropes and figures, which the glowing imagination of an oriental furnishes in the richest abundance and variety. But they borrowed their figures from scenery of a peculiar kind; they alluded to phenomena in the heavens and on the earth, of which we can form almost no conception from the state of nature around us; to a variety of birds of singular appearance and habits, that never visit our sky; and to many terrestrial animals, which neither occupy our fields nor haunt our rivers. Besides, they connect the events which they record, and the predictions which they utter, with places whose history, and social as well as domestic manners, are unknown to the rest of the world. This, it must be admitted, throws a shade of obscurity over the pages of inspiration, which it is the duty, as it is the interest, of the biblical student to remove. To understand the meaning of many passages in the sacred records; to discern the force and beauty of the language in which they are clothed, and the admirable propriety and significance of their allusions; in one word, to derive all the advantage from the sacred volume which it is calculated and intended to bestow,—we must render ourselves familiar with the physical and moral condition of the countries where it was written; we must examine the Geographical situation

of Canaan and the surrounding states, ascertain the site of their principal towns and cities, and acquire some knowledge of their history: to this must be added, a suitable acquaintance with the Natural History of the East, and with the Customs and Manners of its inhabitants. In prosecuting this plan, it is proposed to begin these illustrations with a rapid but comprehensive sketch of

SACRED GEOGRAPHY.





Eng. by J. Bartholomew, Edin.



CHAPTER I.

GARDEN OF EDEN—LAND OF NOD—CITY OF ENOCH.

A DESIRE to ascertain the site of the Terrestrial Paradise, is both natural and laudable. Planned by the infinite wisdom, and furnished by the exuberant goodness, of Jehovah, it was the first special proof of his kindness to man after his creation; and though no longer existing, every well disposed mind must feel the impulse of a pious curiosity to discover the favoured spot that was chosen as the birthplace of the world's inhabitants. The investigation is undoubtedly attended with many difficulties; but these, it is hoped, are not insurmountable, and by consequence, they only stimulate the mind to active exertion, and hold out a more ample reward to the successful inquirer.

The universal deluge certainly made a deep impression on the surface of our globe; but it could not materially change the great features of nature. That mighty agent might dissolve and level some hills and mountains of softer consistency,—might swallow up the waters of some minor streams, or give them a different direction,—might bury some extensive tracts of country, with all their habitations and improvements, in the bottom of the sea, and compensate for their destruction, by elevating submarine districts of equal extent into dry land; but the more solid parts of our earth

must have remained as before that awful catastrophe. It is unreasonable to suppose, that the waters of the deluge, in the short space of one hundred and fifty days, could wash down such stupendous ranges as those of the Armenian or Gordiæan mountains, or give them a different position on the surface of the globe. In all probability, the great features of those mountains were unchanged by the deluge; so that the torrents which, before that calamity, descended from their sides to swell the magnificent streams of the Euphrates and the Tigris, must have resumed their ancient course, and poured their tributary waters into the same capacious channels. The language which the sacred writer employs when he speaks of the Euphrates, seems to confirm this remark. In his description of Paradise, he observes, 'The fourth river is Euphrates;' and in the 15th chapter of the same book he mentions it again, but without any notice that it was a different stream, or that it had changed its course; on the contrary, he now uses the definite article, which he could not have done with propriety if it were not the same river. In the 18th verse he speaks of it again, in the very manner in which we commonly mention a thing already known; and in every other part of his writings where he mentions the Euphrates, he continues to use the same mode of speech. But it could not be his design to deceive the reader even in a point of minor importance; and if the antediluvian Euphrates was not the same with 'that great river the river Euphrates,' which he informs us watered the rich fields of Babylonia, he could not be ignorant of the fact. From this statement we think it is evident, that the surface of our globe has suffered by the deluge no change which ought to discourage us from attempting to ascertain the real situation of the terrestrial Paradise.*

The sacred historian has favoured us with only a few brief hints, in relation to the seat of primeval happi-

* Shuckford's Connect. l. 1.

ness. A more particular description, after the fall of man, would have been attended with no real advantage; while the concise view which he has given, is well calculated to instruct mankind—in the folly of seeking a place of rest or happiness on earth, in the propriety of regarding this world as a place of exile, and in the imperious necessity of turning from the evanescent enjoyments of time, to the pure and imperishable pleasures of the heavenly Paradise.

The Garden of Eden was contrived by the wisdom, and planted by the hand of God himself, for the residence of the first pair. The munificence of the Creator stored it with every plant, and flower, and tree, that was pleasant to the eye, grateful to the smell, and adapted to the sustenance of sinless man. A river went out of Eden to water it, whose ample and refreshing streams, so necessary to the very existence of an oriental garden, visiting every part of the sacred inclosure, diffused a perpetual verdure, and imparted to every plant beauty, vigour, and fertility, perhaps unknown in any other district of that delightful region.

But though no doubt can be entertained of its being richly furnished with every pleasure suited to the intended abode of innocence and peace, we have no direct information as to the quarter of the world where it was placed. The precise situation of Paradise continues to be involved in much obscurity; and, perhaps, all we can hope to obtain from the most careful and well-directed investigation is, an approximation to the truth.

The Hebrew word Eden signifies pleasure or delight ;*

* The original Greek word garden *παράδεισος* is supposed to be derived from the Persian *Ferdoos*, and signifies a pleasant place, —a place full of delights; hence our own word *paradise*. It is used sometimes for a rich and spacious inclosure, where beasts range; in which sense it is used by Nehemiah, when he solicited letters from Artaxerxes to Asaph, the keeper of the king's forest and paradise; at other times for a garden abounding with every variety of fragrant flowers, plants, and fruit-bearing trees, as in Song iv. 13, where mention is made of an orchard, literally, a paradise of pomegranates; and in Ecclesiastes ii. 5, where the royal preacher says he

and certainly intimates the superior beauty of the region which was known by that name. For the same reason it was, in succeeding ages, imposed as a proper name on several other places remarkable for the pleasantness of their situation, and the diversified richness of the scenery with which they were adorned.

To one of those fertile spots which, in the progress of time, and in allusion to the garden of God, obtained the name of Eden, the prophet Amos directs our notice in these words:—‘I will break also the bar of Damascus, and cut off the inhabitants from the plain of Aven,* and him that holdeth the sceptre from the house of Eden.’† The place which, in the time of the prophet, bore this name, is supposed to be a deep valley situated between the mountains Libanus and Antilibanus, not far from Damascus, the metropolis of Syria.‡ In this romantic and sequestered vale, the credulous natives still believe the terrestrial Paradise was placed; and proud of occupying the interesting spot where dwelt the father of the human family before the entrance of sin, they conduct the traveller to the place where Adam was created, to that where Cain murdered his brother, and to the tomb where the bones of Abel repose.§ On the banks of the river Barrady, which

made himself gardens, literally, paradises. Hence, says Rosenmuller, ‘some would translate “a garden in Eden,” “a garden in a pleasant country.”’ But that Eden is here the proper name of a certain tract of land, is evident from its being said, Gen. iv. 16, that Nod lay to the east of Eden. The same word also occurs, 2 Kings xix. 12, Isaiah xxxvii. 12, as the name of a district of Mesopotamia or Assyria.—*Bib. Geog.—Editor.*

* *i. e.* the valley of Baalbec.

† Or Beth-Eden, Amos i. 5.

‡ Hence it was called Cælo-Syria, *i. e.* Hollow Syria, situated in a deep valley, inclosed on both sides by the mountains of Libanus and Antilibanus.—*Editor.*

§ The tradition that the garden of Eden once stood here originated in the extreme loveliness of the site. The salubrity of the climate during the greater part of the year, is a strong recommendation to this region. Eden is the Bagneres of Lebanon. Were it as near and easy of access as the Pyrenees, what multitudes of the invalid and curious would cover its romantic fields!—*Carne's Views in Syria.—Editor.*

runs along the bottom of the valley, between two steep rocky mountains, the kings of Syria had a magnificent palace, which they dignified with the name of Beth-Eden, or the house of pleasure. Several tall pillars were still standing when Mr Maundrell* visited the place; who found them, on a nearer view, to have been part of the front of some ancient and very magnificent edifice, but of what kind he was unable to conjecture. These were probably the remains of the once sumptuous palace of Beth-Eden, whither the kings of Damascus often escaped from the restraints of a court, and the cares of state, to enjoy the pleasures of retirement and recreation. If these conjectures be well founded, the ruin of the Syrian king is, with great elegance and propriety, expressed by God's cutting off him that holdeth the sceptre from Beth-Eden.

Besides this Eden mentioned by the prophet, ancient geographers take notice of a village called Eden, near Tripoli in Syria, where some have placed the terrestrial Paradise.†

Moreover, several towns mentioned in Greek and Latin authors, bore the names of Adana, or Adena, which has been indisputably derived from the Hebrew term Eden. The town of Adena, in Cilicia, has been greatly celebrated for its charming situation, and the extraordinary fruitfulness of the surrounding country. In Arabia, we find a port at the entrance of the Red Sea, on the coast of Yemen or Arabia Felix, named Aden (a manifest abridgment of Adena), because it comprehended in it all the beauties of that region. The Arabians boasted of another town in the middle of the country, which also received the name of Aden for the same reason; and from these proper names, the belief arose in after ages that Paradise was situated in Arabia Felix.

* Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem, p. 133.

† Noticed by Maudrell, p. 135.

But to none of these places, will the marks of the garden described by Moses in the beginning of Genesis apply. The Garden of Eden is described as being situated eastward in Eden. The inspired writer composed his history of the creation and fall of man, either in Egypt or in the land of Midian;* but Syria lies not to the east, but rather to the north of these countries; nor can Syria boast of a river, whose channel, in its progress to the ocean, is divided into four branches. We must, therefore, look for the situation of Paradise in a different region.

The land of Eden, according to Moses, who is our only guide in this investigation, lay on the banks of a large river, which, on leaving the borders of that country, was divided into four streams, called Pison, Gihon, Hiddekel, and Perath or Euphrates. To ascertain as nearly as possible, then, the true situation of Paradise, we must endeavour to find out and trace the course of these four celebrated streams. This will be the more easily done, as one of them still retains the name it bore in the time of Moses, and is familiarly known to both ancient and modern geographers. But I shall follow the example of other writers on the subject, and take them in the order of the sacred historian.

The first river mentioned by Moses, is the Pison, which, he informs us, ‘compasseth the whole land of Havilah.’ It appears, from another passage in his writings, that Havilah is a part of the country inhabited by the posterity of Ishmael:—‘And they dwelt from Havilah unto Shur, that is before Egypt.’† The inspired writer of the first book of Samuel mentions it again in these words:—‘Saul smote the Amalekites from Havilah, until thou comest to Shur, that is before Egypt.’‡ But Arabia is the country allotted to Ish-

* There is no ground for the conjecture that Moses wrote his history in Egypt. The probability is, that he wrote in Arabia Petrea, either in the land of Midian or the wilderness of Sinai.—*Editor*.

† Genesis xxv. 18,

‡ 1 Samuel xv. 7.

mael and his descendants, where they have dwelt from the remotest ages, in the presence of all their brethren ; and, by consequence, Havilah must be situated near the Persian gulf. For ' Shur which is before Egypt,' is the western extremity of Arabia, at the bottom of the Red Sea ; as the following passage from the book of Exodus incontestibly proves : — ' Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur.* But Shur is opposed by the inspired writer to Havilah ; and therefore the latter must be the eastern extremity of Arabia, or that part of the country which borders on the Persian gulf.†

Again, Moses assures us that Havilah, which was refreshed by the waters of the Pison, was distinguished by its fine gold, bdellium, and onyx-stones ; and the same valuable products formerly abounded in the eastern extremity of Arabia. Both inspired and profane authors commend the gold of that country. Diodorus says, in several parts of his works, that in Arabia was found natural gold of so lively a colour, that it very much resembled the brightness of fire ; and so fine, that it wanted neither fire nor refining to purify it.‡ To this country Ezekiel also alludes in his address to the city of Tyre : — ' The merchants of Sheba and Raamah, they were thy merchants ; they traded in thy fairs with the chief of all spices, and with all precious stones and gold. Haran, and Canneh, and Eden, the merchants of Sheba, Asshur, and Chilmad, were thy merchants,' &c.§ In this passage, the prophet expressly mentions Eden as a country abounding in gold

* Exodus xv. 22.

† It is deserving of notice, that the people or tribes inhabiting Havilah, or, as it is more properly rendered, Chavilah, have received from Pliny and others designations that evidently derived their origin from that name ; such as Chaulothæi, Chaulosii, Chablasii, and Chaselæi.—*Editor*.

‡ Lib. 2, c. 14, and l. 3, c. 3, quoted Well's Geog. vol. i. p. 6.

§ Ezek. xxvii. 22, 23. [If Canneh be Calneh or Calyo, which is supposed to be Ctesiphon, then Eden must have been to the south of that city.]—*Editor*.

and other precious commodities, and its inhabitants as carrying on an extensive traffic in these valuable articles, with the most celebrated commercial city of the ancient world. But if Havilah was not a district of the country which bore the name of Eden, it certainly lay in its immediate neighbourhood, and, by consequence, possessed the same products, and shared in the same trade.*

The next distinctive character of this country is its possessing bdellium. The original Hebrew term Bdolach, is variously translated by interpreters. Of the many opinions which have divided the sentiments of learned and inquisitive men, the most probable are, that it is an aromatic gum, or the pearl. The last of these opinions is entitled to the preference; for Moses, describing the manna, says, that it was like the seed of coriander, and the colour thereof as the colour of bdellium.† But we know, from another passage in his writings,‡ that the manna was white; which corresponds with the colour of the pearl. But neither the round shape of the coriander seed, which is equally the figure of the pearl, nor the white colour of the manna, corresponds with the aromatic gum which has received the name of bdellium. The Talmudists accordingly observe, on the description which Moses has given of the manna, that it was of the colour of pearls.§ But, without entering into this dispute, it is sufficient to observe, that whether the Hebrew word Bdolach be taken for pearls, or for an aromatic gum of that name, both are to be found in the land of Havilah.||

* The tribes mentioned in the above passage of Ezekiel were all located in the neighbourhood of the Euphrates and the Persian gulf; a circumstance which, together with the correspondence of the productions of the two countries, does seem strongly to confirm the opinion expressed in the text, and to point out the Havilah described by Moses to have been contiguous to the Eden of the prophet.—*Editor*.

† Numbers xi. 7.

‡ Exodus xvi. 14, 31.

§ Bochart. Hieroz. part ii. b. 5, c. 5.

|| Well's Historical Geography, vol. i. pp. 9, 10.

The Persian gulf, and particularly that part of it which washes the shores of Havilah, produces finer pearls, and in greater abundance, than any other place in the world. Many writers of the highest reputation might be quoted in support of this assertion; but the authority of Pliny|| and Arrian is sufficient. The former, having commended the pearls of the Indian seas, adds, that such as are fished towards Arabia in the Persian gulf, are most to be praised; and the latter sets a greater value on the pearls of Arabia, than upon those of the Indies, observing that some of them are so much esteemed by the Indians, as to be valued at three times their weight in gold.†

If by bdellium we understand an aromatic gum, products of this kind have also been found in Arabia. Dioscorides‡ expressly asserts it; and he sets a greater value upon the bdellium of the Saracens, than upon the bdellium of the Indies. And Galen,§ comparing the bdellium of Arabia with that of the Indies, gives the preference in several respects to the former. Pliny prefers the bdellium of Bactriana to that of Arabia; but he values the bdellium of Arabia above all the rest.|| So abundant were the spices and drugs of Arabia, that Arrian says, the natives of that country carried on an extensive and lucrative commerce in these precious commodities, with the city of Diridotis, which is the same with Teredon, the ruins of which are still to be seen on the confines of Havilah.¶ But though it could not be shown that these precious spices were the native products of that part of Arabia, yet, as the caravans from the interior passed through it on their way to Diridotis, in its immediate neighbourhood,

* Plin. Nat. Hist. Paris edition, by Brotier, lib. 9, sec. 54.

† Rooke's Translation, vol. ii. p. 218, London; see also Strabo, lib. i. p. 31. [Pearls are still found in great plenty and perfection in Baharen, an island near Al Katif, situated in the Persian gulf.]—*Editor.*

‡ Lib. i. c. 77.

§ Galen de Simpl. Medic. lib. 4.

¶ Well's Hist. Geog. vol. i. pp. 9, 10; Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. 12, sec. 19.

¶ Lib. i. pp. 30, 31.

to dispose of their merchandise, the language of Moses is justified, and the true situation of Havilah ascertained.

The last distinguishing mark of Havilah mentioned by the sacred historian, is the onyx-stone.* To what particular stone the Hebrew term Schoham refers, cannot be ascertained with any degree of certainty ; † but that Arabia did abound in precious stones of different kinds, is expressly stated by both sacred and profane writers. The prophet Ezekiel mentions precious stones among the articles of commerce which the inhabitants of Sheba and Raamah, places on the eastern coast of Arabia, not far from Havilah, brought to the markets of Tyre.‡ Both Strabo§ and Diodorus|| assert, that the riches of Arabia consisted in precious stones and excellent perfumes ; and Pliny assures us, that the most precious gems came from that country. But if we confine the Hebrew word Schoham to denote the onyx-stone, the distinctive character is still equally applicable to Arabia ; for Pliny says, the ancients are persuaded that the onyx-stone was nowhere else to be found but in the mountains of that country.¶

From this statement it appears that in the eastern extremity of Arabia was situated a country called Havilah, abounding in fine gold, in pearls, in aromatic gums, and in precious stones, among which the onyx held a conspicuous place.** Now this country, Moses informs us, was encompassed by the river Pison ; and on inspecting the maps both of ancient and modern

* The onyx is a precious stone, so called from a Greek word signifying a man's nail, the colour of which it strongly resembles.—*Editor.*

† The authors of the Septuagint translate the word variously, emerald, topaz, sardonyx, sapphire, beryl ; showing that they were unable to determine with precision the substance that is meant.—*Editor.*

‡ Ezekiel xxvii. 22.

§ Strab. lib. 16, p. 520.

|| Diod. lib. 2, p. 161, edit. Wetstenii.

¶ Plin. Natur. Histor. l. 36, sec. 12.

** See Harris' Natural History ; onyx.

geographers, we discover a stream washing, in its course, one side of that celebrated region ; and also communicating with three other rivers by one common channel. We have thus obtained all the marks by which the inspired historian distinguished the Pison, and have therefore some reason to conclude, that the western channel of the Euphrates is the Pison of the Sacred Scriptures.

The name of the second river is Gihon, concerning which Moses says, ‘ The same is it which compasseth the whole land of Cush.’ As the Gihon cannot be at any great distance from the river Pison, a kindred stream, we must look for the land of Cush, not on the borders of Ethiopia and Egypt, but near the country of Havilah. And here we do find a country, watered by the eastern branch of the Euphrates, which has borne the name of Cush, from the remotest antiquity down to the present times. All travellers inform us, that Suziana is now called Chuzestan ; in which it is easy to discern the original term Cush, or, as it is written by some, Chus or Chuz. Benjamin of Navarre says, that the great province of Elam, of which Susa is the metropolis, and which the Tigris waters, bears this name. This province, the same with Elymais, extends as far as the Persian gulf, east from the mouth of the Euphrates. It is the Cuthah of the Sacred Scriptures, which is only the Chaldee form of Cush or Cush, from which Shalmaneser transported a colony to re-people the desolated country of the ten tribes.* The colony long retained their ancient name, and were called Cutheans. As the Chaldeans often change *sh* into *t* or *th*, the words Cuthah and Cuth are only the Chaldee form of Cush and Cush. The word Shushan, the name which the prophet gives to the capital of Elam, is evidently derived from the same root.† We have thus sufficient evidence, that a province of the Baby-

* 2 Kings xvii. 24.

† Daniel viii. 2.

lonish empire, extending to the Persian gulf, east from the mouth of the Euphrates, was formerly called Cush ; and therefore the river which washes it must be the Gihon of Moses.*

The name of the third river is Hiddekel. That this river is the same with the Tigris, is generally believed. The Seventy Interpreters render the Hebrew word Hiddekel, the Tigris ; which is only the original word in a different form.†

➤ Of this river Moses says, ‘That is it which goes before Assyria.’ The term Assyria, in the days of Moses, and long after his time, was the designation, not of the Assyrian empire, which consisted of many extensive provinces, but of that single province of which Nineveh was the capital. Moses, therefore, must have used the term in this limited application ; and in this view, the course of the Tigris exactly corresponds with the description which the sacred historian gives of the Hiddekel. A traveller from Egypt or Midian, where Moses wrote, could not enter Assyria without first crossing the Tigris, which, running before or on that side of Assyria, separated that province from the regions which lay next to those countries. This view may be thought inconsistent with the description of the inspired writer, which, in our translation, is rendered, ‘That is it which goes toward the east of Assyria ;’ or, as it is in the margin, eastward to Assyria. But the original term which our translators render eastward, comes from a root which refers equally to time and place, signifying literally to go before ; the noun itself signifies priority of place or situation, and therefore cannot with propriety be restrained to the eastern side. It is accordingly rendered in the Septuagint, in the Vulgate, and in the Syriac version, *over against, or along the side of*, Assyria ; in which they have been fol-

* See Well’s Geography, vol. i. p. 15. The reader is referred to the remarks made on the word Cush towards the end of chapter IV.

† See Well’s Georg. vol. i. p. 17.

lowed by some of the most celebrated Hebrew scholars in modern times.

The last of the four rivers is the Euphrates. This noble stream, rolling his majestic and ample waters through the neighbouring countries, was familiarly known to the nations for whom the inspired historian wrote, without any mark of distinction. Moses calls this river Perath, which the Greeks, adjusting it in their usual manner to their own language, turned into Euphrates.

The sacred text speaks of only one river which watered the land of Eden ; which, after leaving its boundary, was parted into four streams. This account perfectly corresponds with the course of these rivers which we have now been tracing ; for the Euphrates and the Tigris unite their waters, and after flowing together in one channel for a considerable way, separate again into two channels, the one which is probably the Pison taking a westerly, and the other which is the Gihon an easterly, direction. The land of Eden then lay on the single channel which was common to all the four rivers ; for, says the historian, ‘A river went out of Eden to water the garden ; and from thence it was parted and became into four heads.’ Within the limits of Eden, the river flowed in only one channel ; but from thence, or beyond Eden, it was parted and became four heads, or principal channels.*

It has been contended by some writers, that the four heads cannot with any propriety be understood of four streams into which the river of Eden was divided, but of the four sources from which it issued ; and that these four streams united their waters immediately before they entered the country of Eden, and pursued their course in one majestic flood to the Persian gulf : for the word which is translated head, naturally refers to the beginning, not to any changes in the progress of

* See Dr Well's Hist. Geog. pp. 19, 20, 21.

a river. But, admitting that the term head properly means the source or commencement of a river, it is not inconsistent with the view which has been now taken. To a person ascending the river, the point where the Euphrates and Tigris united their streams, is in reality the beginning or entry of each of these rivers; and, on the contrary, the point of separation is the head or beginning of the Pison and the Gihon. The Seventy Interpreters certainly admit this solution, for they render the original term *ἀρχαι*, beginnings. But another solution, still more natural and satisfactory, may be offered. The original term often signifies chief, principal, or most excellent; and, by consequence, the words of Moses may be rendered, From thence it was divided into four principal channels, four noble rivers, excluding, as unworthy of particular notice, other inferior streams which might branch off in their progress to the ocean.

These statements render it probable that the garden planted by the hand of God in Eden, for the residence of our first father, lay on the single river formed by the united streams of the Tigris and the Euphrates.

It is added in the sacred text that Paradise was situated eastward in Eden. It could not be the design of Moses, after stating that the garden was planted among the rivers of Babylon, to inform his people, that it lay toward the east from Midian or the promised land; for of this they could not now be ignorant. His intention certainly was to point out that part of Eden which had been honoured as the seat of primeval innocence; to intimate that it lay in the easterly part of that highly favoured country, and, by consequence, since 'the river which watered it ran through that province before it entered Paradise,' on one of the great turnings of this river from west to east; and, in the opinion of Dr Wells, at the easterly end of the southerly branch of the lowest great turn-

ing, taken notice of in Ptolemy, and expressed in the map belonging to his Geography.*

The primitive idea of the terrestrial Paradise was long present to the imagination, and dear to the heart, of the oriental nations. It was the pattern of those curious gardens, which their nobles and princes caused to be fabricated of the most precious materials, and at a vast expense; the costly memorials of departed innocence. Such was that garden of pure gold, valued at five hundred talents, which Aristobulus, king of the Jews, presented to Pompey, and which the Roman general afterwards carried in triumph, and consecrated to Jupiter in the capitol.† The garden of Eden seems also to have been the prototype of those gardens of delight, consecrated to Adonis, which the Assyrians and other nations in the East planted in earthen vessels, and silver baskets, in order to adorn their houses, and swell the pomp and splendour of their public processions. It furnished the enraptured poets of Greece and Rome with the never-fading verdure, the perpetual bloom, and the fruits of burnished gold, with which their glowing imaginations clothed the Fortunate Isles, or enriched the garden of the Hesperides.‡

But, what is of much greater importance, the in-

* Well's Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 24; Bocharti Phaleg. lib. i. c. 3, pp. 12-28.

† Joseph. Antiq. b. xiv. chap. 3, sec. 1.

‡ John Edward's Perfection of Scripture, vol. i. pp. 104, 106. [In the garden of Eden is to be found also the true origin of the sacred gardens of the heathen, allusions to which are frequently made by the prophets. Isaiah, for instance, calls the backsliding Jews of his day, 'a people that provoketh me to anger continually to my face, that sacrificeth in gardens;' lxxv. 3. 'Ye shall be made ashamed of the oaks which ye have desired, and ye shall be confounded for the gardens which ye have chosen,' i. 29; and in one passage, allusive to these idolatrous gardens, this prophet makes a remarkable statement, which shows that the tree of knowledge, which was situated in the midst of the garden, was traditionally known and imitated by the heathen in the plantation of their consecrated groves. 'They that sanctify and purify themselves behind one tree in the midst, eating swine's flesh, and the abomination, and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the Lord;' lxxvi. 17.]—Editor.

spired writers of the New Testament have borrowed some of their most beautiful figures from the terrestrial paradise. In the glowing description of the millennium, with which the apostle John closes the book of Revelation, it is easy to discover a number of allusive passages. The nations of the redeemed shall wander on the banks of a pure and majestic river, and drink of its refreshing streams; they shall repose under the shade of the tree of life, and feast without restraint on its rich and various fruits; no flaming cherubim shall obstruct the way of the returning sinner to its shelter, and no serpent shall inflict a wound which its leaves cannot heal.* But the delights of paradise apply with still greater force and beauty to the land of everlasting rest. The same writer therefore enforces his call to the church of Ephesus, to repent 'and do the first works,' with this declaration:—'To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God;'[†] and the dying Saviour cheered the last moments of the penitent thief with this most consoling promise, which in one word conveyed to his mind the most vivid conception of celestial happiness:—'To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.'[‡]

* Rev. xxii. 1, 2, 3.

† Rev. ii. 7.

‡ Luke xxiii. 43. [The opinion given by our author respecting the probable site of the primeval paradise, is that which was first broached by Calvin, and warmly espoused and elaborately defended by Huetius, bishop of Avranches. Bochart, Morinus, Wells, and others, among whom is Grotius, have also with some trifling differences, given it the support of their high authority; and certainly it must be acknowledged, that arguments of a very plausible kind, and of no small weight, have been adduced in defence of this hypothesis. According to this scheme, Eden lay on either side of the united stream of the Hiddekel or Dijlat, the Tigris, and of the Euphrates, which junction is now called by the Arabs Shat-el-Arab, and which, according to the statement of Thevenot and others, begins two day's journey above Bussorah, and above five miles below divides again into several channels, which empty themselves into the Persian Gulf. Thus the Shat-el-Arab would be the river that went out of Eden; and if viewed not according to the current, but by an inspection of its channel, it appears to divide into four heads

Adjoining to the land of Eden lay the country of Nod, the place of Cain's exile, and the scene of his wanderings. Unable to bear the presence of his father,

or branches, which constituted the four rivers mentioned by Moses, viz. two below, the Pison, which is the western branch, and the Gihon and two above, the Tigris and Euphrates. Among other difficulties, however, connected with this hypothesis, the two following seem to be very obvious, first, that the two lower branches of the Stat-el-Arab seem to be too inconsiderable to *encompass* countries of any extent, or even to be dignified with the name of rivers; and secondly, that though avowedly founded on the supposition, that the grand leading features of the earth's surface, and especially the channels of the rivers, continued the same after the deluge as before that great devastation, the actual appearance of the site fixed upon does not correspond with the description of the inspired historian. 'The garden,' says Mr Milne, 'seems to have been a peninsula; for the way or entrance into it is afterwards mentioned. We are told that a river went out of it, which, according to some, should be rendered ran on the outside of it, and thus gave it the form of a horse shoe; for had the Euphrates ran through the middle of the garden, one half of it would have been useless to Adam without a bridge wherewith to have crossed it.'

The truth is, that the grand error into which almost all writers on this subject have fallen, is, that they have searched in some existing locality for features of a country corresponding to the description given in the book of Genesis; whereas, it is well known from the observations of geologists, as well as from the testimony of history and tradition, that the surface of the earth almost universally has undergone so many changes since its formation from inundations, earthquakes, and a variety of other causes, especially from the influence of the universal deluge, which must have, to a great degree, broken up and deranged the channels of rivers, &c., that it may be confidently pronounced to be a hopeless attempt now to discover any place on the surface of the globe exactly answering the inspired description of Eden.

Another hypothesis, which is supported by the name of the eminent Dutch geographer Reland, Calmet, and others, places Eden in Armenia. Proceeding upon the idea, that while Cain went eastward, Seth and his pious posterity continued in the vicinity of the original paradise; and that the ark of Noah rested, after the subsiding of the deluge, at no great distance from his ancient abode; they consider Mount Ararat as a commanding feature, that naturally points out the quarter where the site of Eden is to be sought for. They farther support their opinion by supposing Cush to mean the country of the Cossai, or Caucasus according to others, and by dwelling on the circumstance of the Euphrates, the Tigris, the Araxes, and the Phases (or Cyrus) having their sources among the mountains of Armenia at no great distance.

Many other localities have the honour assigned them of having

whom he had so deeply injured and so grievously afflicted ; stimulated by the accusations and forebodings of his own guilty conscience ; and required, it is probable, by an express mandate from Heaven,—he forsook the fruitful and pleasant fields of Eden, which he had polluted with a brother's blood, and directed his course to the neighbouring desert. Here he endeavoured to forget the agonies of remorse in the engagements of active life ; and to secure himself and his family from the dreaded resentment of his irritated brethren, he built a city ; and, yielding to the dictates of parental affection, called it after the name of his son Enoch. It is extremely probable that the term Nod, derived from a Hebrew verb which signifies to wander, was not the proper name of the country, but only an appellative, denoting a fugitive or vagabond, in allusion to the wandering life which Cain was doomed to lead during the residue of his days.

The true situation of Nod is, not less than that of

been the scene of the terrestrial paradise. Michaelis, places it near the Caspian Sea. Josephus, and many of the Fathers, in the country lying between the Nile and the Ganges. Some in India, and some, under an impression that since the flood the climates have been completely altered, have advocated the opinion which assigns it to the cold northern regions of Europe. These extraordinary diversities of opinion have probably arisen from the profound ignorance into which the Jews fell as to every thing connected with the antiquities of the Bible after their captivity, and partly also from the discrepancies found between the statements of Moses and those of profane authors, whose use of geographical terms it is often extremely difficult to understand or reconcile. The allegorizing spirit of many of the christian fathers, too, led them to suppose that the terrestrial paradise was purely an imaginary picture ; at least, that it never existed on this earth, but had its locality, if any, in the middle region of the air, or the moon. It were a useless waste of time and space to state the arguments by which each theorist supports the probable truth of his own views ; and as the subject, however interesting, is purely a matter of antiquarian curiosity, and is not connected with the elucidation of any important point in the history or doctrines of the Bible, we must refer our readers who wish to prosecute the subject, to the ancient *Universal History*, vol. viii. ; or *Rosenmuller's Geography*, the translator of which Mr Morren has given a tabular view of the different opinions on the site of Eden, with the names of the authors who respectively support them.]—*Ed.*

Eden, involved in much obscurity, which the most celebrated geographers have endeavoured in vain to dissipate. The imperfect resemblance of one name to another, and the corresponding situation of ancient cities, are insufficient to guide the cautious inquirer to a satisfactory conclusion. It is extremely improbable that the city of Enoch which Cain built, was able to resist the shock of the deluge. Like the garden of Paradise, it was certainly swept from the face of the earth, without leaving a single vestige behind to mark the spot where it once stood. And were the opinion of Huetius admitted, that Anuchtha, the name of an ancient city in the province of Susiana or Khuzestan, is the Chaldee form of Enoch, and that Ptolemy was right in placing it on the east of Eden, it will not follow that it was the city built by Cain ; for the inspired writer mentions another person of that name, the son of Jared, and father of Methuselah, so remarkable for religion, that God, as a signal reward to him, and an encouragement to others, translated him to heaven, without subjecting him to the common lot of our fallen nature. From which of these persons the city of Anuchtha might take its name, cannot now be determined. The probability is, that it derived its name from neither, but was built in honour of some person who bore the name of Enoch in ages long posterior.

That the murderer was compelled to remove to a greater distance from the scene of his wickedness than Huetius supposes, is rendered extremely probable from the terms of his sentence :—‘ And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother’s blood from thy hand. When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength ; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.’* These words, addressed by the Judge of all the earth to the blood-stained criminal, certainly refer, not to the fertile regions that, except toward the

* Genesis iv. 11, 12.

west, encircled the land of Eden, but to some barren and ungrateful soil, from which his utmost exertions should scarcely procure him a scanty subsistence. It was not then in the pleasant and fruitful country of Susiana, where Ptolemy places the city of Anuchtha, that the fratricide was compelled to wander, but in the thirsty and sterile deserts of Arabia Petræa, a region admirably adapted to the purposes of punishment or correction.* This part of Arabia extends to the western boundary of Eden, and, by consequence, in relation to the place where Moses resided and wrote, is strictly and properly 'before or over against it;' which greatly corroborates the opinion, first suggested by Grotius, that those frightful deserts received the condemned fugitive.†

These circumstances considered, it is probable that the land of Nod was situated somewhere in the eastern extremity of Arabia Petræa, extending its border to the western limits of Eden. But no traces of the name are now to be found to guide the researches, and reward the labours, of the inquirer. Nor can it be ascertained whether the word Nod is to be taken for a proper name or an appellative. It cannot, however, admit of a doubt, that it alludes to the exile of the fratricide.

* Some suppose that their sterility might be the effect of the curse pronounced upon Cain:—'When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength.'—*Editor*.

† While Grotius places the land of Nod in Arabia Petræa, Hue-tius fixes it in the south-east of Persia, Michaelis towards China, Calmet in Nysa, &c.—*Editor*.

CHAPTER II.

THE MOUNTAINS OF ARARAT, UPON WHICH THE ARK OF
NOAH RESTED.

IN what country these mountains are situated, and on what part of them the ark rested, are the objects of our present inquiry. From Bochart we learn that the Sibylline oracles placed the mountains of Ararat in Phrygia, which cannot be reconciled with the statement of the inspired writer. That learned and indefatigable author traces the mistake to the name of a city in Phrygia, Apamea Cibotus. The word *κιβωτος* is of Greek origin, denoting in that language an ark. From this trifling circumstance, the pretended sibyl inferred, that the ark of Noah rested on an adjoining hill, and gave the surname of Cibotus to Apamea. But Bochart assigns a very different reason, that Apamea received the surname of Cibotus, because it was inclosed in the shape of an ark by three rivers, which give it the resemblance to a chest or ark. In like manner, he observes, the port of Alexandria was called Cibotus, from the bay by which it was nearly surrounded. The true situation of Ararat must therefore be sought for in a different country.*

The common opinion is, that Ararat is only another name for Armenia. The Vulgate, accordingly, has on Genesis viii. 4, the mountains of Armenia, for the mountains of Ararat. The Greek interpreters, and after them the Vulgate, render the word Ararat, in 2 Kings xix. 37, Isaiah xxxvii. 38, in the same manner, and our

* Bochart. Phaleg. lib. i. cap. 3, p. 14.

translators have followed their example :—‘ And it came to pass as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer, his sons, smote him with the sword ; and they escaped into the land of Armenia.’

Some writers, however, contend that the mountains of Ararat may extend beyond the limits of that country. The whole of that stupendous range known to the ancients by the name of mount Taurus, which, beginning in the Lesser Asia, stretches as far as the East Indies, might very well be called by Moses the mountains of Ararat, because that was the first country of the Greater Asia through which they passed, and where they reached a much greater elevation than they had done before. If this view be just, the mountains of Ararat will extend as far as to mount Caucasus, in the confines of Tartary, Persia, and India.*

That part of Armenia on which the ark rested, is generally supposed, by the favourers of the first opinion, to have been the Gordiæan mountains, near the source of the Tigris. In proof of this opinion, the ancients, who generally embraced it, assure us that some remains of the ark were to be seen on those mountains so late as the days of Alexander the Great ; that in the neighbourhood was situated a town called Cemain or Themana, from the Hebrew word Shemen, which signifies *eight*, in allusion to the eight persons that were saved from the deluge ; and that the very place where Noah and his family went out of the ark, was distinguished by a name expressive of the event. The following argument is quoted from a modern writer :—‘ It is, with great probability, supposed that Noah built the ark in the country of Eden,† and since the deluge was not only caused by rains, but also by the overflowing of the ocean, as the Scripture tells us, Gen.

* Dr Well's Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 30.

† It is supposed, on good grounds, that the material of which the ark was built was the cypress wood, which grew in great abundance

vii. 11, that the fountains of the great deep were broken up; this overflowing, which came from the Persian sea, running from the south, and meeting the ark, of course carried it away to the north towards the Gordiæan mountains. And the learned and ingenious Huetius has observed, that, considering the figure of the ark, which made it not so fit for speedy sailing, and also its heaviness, which made it draw much water, the space of an hundred and fifty days, which was the time the deluge lasted, was but a proportionable time for the moving of the ark from the place where it was made, to the Gordiæan mountains. So that both the situation of these mountains, in respect to the course of the waters of the deluge, and also its distance from the place where Noah lived and built the ark, do jointly conspire to render this hypothesis still more probable.*

Those, on the other hand, who extend the mountains of Ararat beyond the confines of Armenia, fix on the summit of Caucasus as the place where the ark rested after the flood.† The strongest argument in favour of this opinion, by the admission of some of its defenders, is founded on these words of Moses :—‘As they went from the east, they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there.’‡ If then they came from the east, as the text plainly says, they might come from those parts of Asia on the south of Caucasus, which lie

in that country, and which, from its well-known durability, was much used anciently in ship-building. Arrianus states, that the fleet built by Alexander the Great at Babylon, was formed entirely of cypress. The province of Babylonia, in which it was generally thought that the country of Eden was situated, produced this wood in great abundance.—*Editor*.

* Well's Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 31.

† ‘The Mohammedans maintain, that it was on Mount Judi, the Mons Masius of the classical writers, the Mash of the Hebrews, Gen. x. 23, the ark first rested; and that this is Ararat, and not the mountain to which that name is given in Armenia. Hasslin Aga maintained to me, that he has, with his own eyes, seen the remains of Noah's ark!’—*Rich's Koordistan*, vol. ii. p. 124.—*Editor*.

‡ Genesis xi. 2.

east of Shinar, though inclining to the north. But they could not possibly come from the Gordiæan mountains in the greater Armenia, which lie far to the north-west of Shinar. And they endeavour to strengthen their argument, by adding an old and constant tradition among the natives of the region near Caucasus, formerly called Margiana, that a great vineyard in this country was of Noah's planting, after he had descended from the adjacent mountain. But, admitting the existence of such a vineyard in Margiana, it cannot be proved that it was planted by the hands of Noah ; for it is evident that mere tradition, however old and constant, is no sufficient proof. Again, if we are to understand by the expression of Moses, ' The fountains of the great deep were broken up,' the overflowing of the sea, which is at least a very natural exposition, the Caspian must also have burst over its natural limits, and inundated the surrounding countries. But a current from the sea, meeting another from the Persian gulf, must have carried the ark toward the north-west, in a line directly opposite to the summits of Caucasus, and left it on the very spot where the defenders of the first hypothesis say it rested—on the mountains of Armenia. Or, should it be said that the current from the Caspian might be counteracted by another equally powerful from the north-east point of the Mediterranean, still it must have retarded the approach of the ark to the top of Caucasus, till the waters of the deluge subsiding, left it on some intervening ridge ; and none can be named with so much probability as the Gordiæan mountains ; for it is both agreeable to Scripture and reason to say, the ark rested on the highest part of the mountains of Ararat ; and it is well known that the Gordiæan chain are the loftiest mountains in Armenia.

But the strongest part of their argument remains,—That the family of Noah travelled from the east to the plain of Shinar, which is directly south from the Gordiæan mountains. Even to this a satisfactory answer

may be returned. It proceeds on the gratuitous supposition, that Noah and his family descended from the mountain on which the ark rested, into the plain of Shinar. That they continued for many years to occupy the summits of these mountains, is extremely probable. The plains and the valleys being reduced to a mire by the waters of the deluge, must have remained long incommodious for the habitations of man. This must have been the case, particularly among the rivers of Babylon, where the plain of Shinar is situated, and where the progress of their settlements must have experienced an additional obstruction, from the extensive marshes and stagnant lakes that were left by the deluge. Nor were they under any necessity to descend precipitately into the plains. The region to which the wisdom of Providence had directed the ark, was admirably calculated to be the cradle of the postdiluvian world ; it is fertile in the highest degree, adorned with the olive, the symbol of peace and safety, and abounding with every production necessary for the support of human life. On the sides of the hills and mountains which intersect this delightful country, the sons of Noah must have found a safe retreat, and the necessities of life for themselves and their families in sufficient abundance ; and as it was natural for them to move towards the rising sun, they extended their settlements, or directed their journeys eastward, till they approached the confines of India. As the marshes and the lakes disappeared, and the face of the plains became dry and habitable, the Noachidæ might descend from the mountains in search of pasture for their flocks, and of more commodious habitations for themselves, at a great distance to the eastward from the land of Shinar ; and pitching their tents, as did the patriarchs in after ages, and taking up their occasional residence in spots remarkable for their beauty, or recommended by the accommodation they afforded, they might at length, without any fixed purpose of settling in Shinar, reach

these luxuriant and happy plains, where they determined to terminate their wanderings, and establish their permanent residence.

But, admitting that Noah and his family descended from the mountain on which the ark rested, near the sources of the Tigris, into the plain of Shinar, still it may be truly asserted, in the words of the inspired historian, that they journeyed from the east ; for it shall be shown in the next chapter, that Shinar stretched away to the north, along the western bank of the Tigris : and, by consequence, Noah and his family no sooner descended into the level country, than they found themselves due east from the northern or upper parts of that plain ; and, therefore, as they journeyed along the foot of the mountains toward the upper part of Shinar, they literally journeyed from the east.

The learned Capellus considers Kedem as the name of a country, from Kedma, the youngest son of Ismael ; and interprets the words of the sacred writer in this manner :—When the posterity of Noah had descended from the mountains of Armenia, into the region which afterwards received the name of Kedem, they found a plain in the land of Shinar.

Not satisfied with this conjecture, Bochart offers another. In his opinion, the inspired writer adopts the common language of the Assyrians, who denominated all that part of their empire which was situated beyond the Tigris, the east, and the provinces on this side, the west : the terms east and west being taken from that river, which, flowing nearly from north to south, divided the Assyrian empire into almost two equal parts. The mountains of Ararat, according to this division, may with propriety be said to belong to the east, as being a part of the empire which lay beyond the Tigris.*

But a more satisfactory reply may be given, by a slight change in the translation. The original phrase

* Lib. i. cap. 7, p. 31.

(Mikedem) evidently denotes, in some parts of the Mosaic writings, not *from the east*, but *on the east-side*; and is so translated in our version. When God expelled our first parents from Paradise, Moses informs us, He placed at the east of the garden of Eden, that is plainly on the east side, cherubims and a flaming sword.* In a following chapter it is stated, that the patriarch Abraham removed from the plain of Moreh unto a mountain (Mikedem) on the east.† Hence the phrase in this passage may be translated, As they journeyed *on the east side* they found a plain in the land of Shinar. When the sons of Noah descended from the mountains, they entered the level country on the east side of the Tigris, and pursuing their journey along the same side of the river, arrived at the plain where they resolved to settle. Or, if the words of Moses be supposed to refer more properly to the land of Shinar than to the river, it will be shown that the Tigris washes the eastern border of that country; and therefore, in journeying down the Tigris, they travelled on the east side of the valley. Viewing the sacred text in this light, it may be admitted, without injury or danger to the hypothesis which has been more generally received, that the plain of Shinar, in which the tower of Babel was afterwards built, lies directly south from the Gordiæan mountains: for the words of the inspired historian only mean, that the Noachidæ travelled along the east side of the country, till they found a plain in its southern extremity, where they resolved to settle. These observations render it extremely probable, that the ark rested on the mountains of Ararat, within the limits of Armenia, and on one of the summits of the Gordiæan range, which rising to a stupendous height above the rest of the chain, overlook the rich and extensive plains of Babylonia.‡

* Gen. iii. 24.

† Gen. xii. 8.

‡ Bocharti. Phaleg. lib. i. c. 5, p. 24; Well's Sacred Geography, vol.

Ararat forms the angle of an immense chain of mountains, on the loftiest pinnacle of which, the natives of the country believe that part of the ark yet remains. It is a most sublime and stupendous object, which excites in the mind of the beholder the mingled emotions of admiration and terror. One of the great features of this mountain is the immense chasm which extends nearly half way down, over which impends a cliff, discernible at a great distance, whose enormous masses of ice are from time to time precipitated into the abyss with a noise resembling the loudest thunder.* ‘Nothing,’ says Mr Morier, ‘can be more beautiful than its shape; more awful than its height. Compared with it, all the other mountains sink into insignificance. It is perfect in all its parts; no hard rugged feature; no unnatural prominences; every thing is in harmony; and all combine to render it one of the most sublime objects in nature. Spreading originally from an immense base, its slope toward the summit is gradual, until it reaches the regions of the snows, when it becomes more abrupt. The cone is surmounted with a crown of ice, which glitters in the sun with a peculiar

i. p. 30. [In addition to the arguments adduced in the text in proof of the Gordiæan Mountains being the resting-place of the ark, and not Caucasus, it may be remarked, that while a strong current from the swell of the Persian Gulf drove that gigantic vessel in a northerly direction towards Armenia, a still stronger current from the north arising from the Black and Caspian Seas, between which Caucasus is situated, must have prevented its being wafted so far north as that mountain. The only startling objection to this opinion, which rests on a venerable tradition, all but universal, has originated with a modern traveller (Tournefort, lett. 7), who says he does not perceive where the dove could find an olive branch, on the supposition that the ark rested on the mountains of Armenia, as the olive does not appear to grow in the whole neighbouring country; nor, says another (Tavernier), does it grow in any part of Asia beyond Aleppo. But to this it may be replied, that whatever may be the case in these countries at the present day, we have the most satisfactory evidence, that the olive was cultivated anciently in all the regions in and about Armenia. Assyria is described as producing olive oil in 2 Kings xviii. 32; and Strabo mentions that the olive grew in Gogarene, a province of Armenia, B. xi. p. 800.]—*Editor*.

* Kinneir's Geographical Memoir of the Persian Empire, p. 326.

and dazzling brightness. As a foil to this stupendous work, a smaller hill rises from the same base, near the original mass, similar to it in shape and proportion, and in any other situation entitled to rank among the high mountains. The mountain is divided into three regions of different breadths. The first, composed of a short and slippery grass, or sand as troublesome as the quicksands of Africa, is occupied by the shepherds; the second, by tigers and crows; the remainder, which is half the mountain, is covered with snow which has been accumulating ever since the ark rested upon it; and these snows are concealed during one half of the year in very dense clouds.' This stupendous mountain Mr Morier and his party endeavoured to scale; and, after excessive fatigue, arrived on the margin of eternal snow. But they found it impossible to proceed and penetrate the highest region; and not easy to go back. At length, utterly exhausted, they reached the bottom, and gave thanks to God for their safe return.*

Sir R. Ker Porter's work affords a still more graphic picture of this sublime mountain:—'From the elevation of the spot where I stood, and the numerous mountains, though inferior to it, that obstructed my view, its appearance did not strike me in the way I had expected. But the true effect, like that in my perfect sight of the Caucasus, after a similar disappointment, was only postponed. Proceeding south-east for nearly forty wersts, at the extremity of a very long valley, we arrived at the ruins of a caravansary, where we halted an hour to rest our horses. At this place a pleasant change presented itself, both in the face of nature and the state of the atmosphere. The universality of the snow had been gradually disappearing during our last day's journey; and the unencumbered heights began to shoot out a little grass. Here the opening of the valley showed still less of white and more of green;

* Morier's Travels in Persia, vol. i. pp. 306, 307, 309; and vol. ii. p. 407.

and the air, though cold, had something of a spring-like elasticity,—no unnecessary cordial to the traveler who reaches this point from the cheerless tract we had just passed over. In fact, during our whole march from the Valley of Kotchivan till we arrived at the caravansary, we had seen neither man nor beast out of our own little band ; and the dead aspect of all objects around, assisted the impression of our being in some vast depopulated wilderness. On leaving our halting-place,' he continues, 'a fuller view of the great plain of Ararat gradually expanded before us, and the mountain itself began to tower, in all its majesty, to the very canopy of heaven. It bore south-east from the line of our caravansary. We now took a descending position due east, over a stony and difficult road, which carried us, for more than ten wersts, through several close and rocky defiles, and over as many frozen streams, till we reached a small Mohammedan village on the side of the Moschian hills. On the morning of the 17th November (O.S.), we left our hospitable Mussulmans, for whether they were so inclined, or overawed by the fierce looks and glittering arms of my attendants, I will not pretend to say, but I had no reason to complain of their want of civility. We set forth over a road as bad as that of the day before, in a direction south-east, and gradually descending from a great height, through a very extended sloping country, towards the immense plain of Ararat.'

'As the vale opened beneath us in our descent, my whole attention became absorbed in the view before me. A vast plain, peopled with countless villages ; the towers and spires of the churches of Eitch-maidzen arising from amidst them ; the glittering waters of the Araxes, flowing through the fresh green of the vale, and the subordinate range of mountains skirting the base of the awful monument of the antediluvian world. It seemed to stand a stupendous link in the history of man, uniting the two races of men before

and after the flood. But it was not until we had arrived upon the flat plain, that I beheld Ararat in all its amplitude of grandeur. From the spot on which I stood, it appeared as if the hugest mountains of the world had been piled upon each other to form this one sublime immensity of earth, and rock, and snow. The icy peaks of its double heads rose majestically into the clear and cloudless heavens; the sun blazed bright upon them, and the reflection sent forth a dazzling radiance equal to other suns. This point of the view united the utmost grandeur of plain and height. But the feelings I experienced, while looking on the mountain, are hardly to be described. My eye, not able to rest for any length of time upon the blinding glory of its summits, wandered down the apparently interminable sides, till I could no longer trace their vast lines in the mists of the horizon, when an irrepressible impulse immediately carrying my eye upwards, again refixed my gaze upon the awful glare of Ararat; and this bewildered sensibility of sight being answered by a similar feeling in the mind, for some moments I was lost in a strange suspension of the powers of thought.

‘Agrida is the name given to this sublime mountain by the Turks; and the Armenians call it *Macis*, but all unite in revering it as the haven of the great ship which preserved the father of mankind from the waters of the deluge. The height of Ararat has never yet been measured with any satisfactory degree of accuracy, though Captain Monteith of the Madras Engineers has gone nearer to the mark perhaps than any other traveller. The following are the results of several trigonometrical observations which he made at Erivan, and was so kind as to communicate to me. From that place to the highest point of the loftiest head, he found fifty-two thousand yards, and from the same spot to the minor head, fifty-five thousand yards. This head (which is distinguished by the appellation Little Ararat, while the higher part is called Great Ararat) is distant

from the other from peak to peak twelve thousand yards. Little Ararat bears from Great Ararat, S. 60 E. Great Ararat bears from the monastery of Eitch-mai-adzen, S. 5 W., and Little Ararat S. 6 E.

‘ Those inaccessible summits have never been trodden by the foot of man since the days of Noah, if even then ; for my idea is, *that the ark rested in the space between these heads, and not on the top of either.*’

Various attempts have been made in different ages to reach the summit of this lofty mountain, but all terminated unsuccessfully, till Dr Parrot, a German professor, after two abortive attempts, achieved this arduous and dangerous undertaking on the 27th of September 1829. His interesting account is as follows :—

‘ He was on a slightly convex, almost circular platform, about 200 Paris feet in diameter, which, at the extremity, declines pretty steeply on all sides, particularly towards the S.E. and N.E. It was the silver crest of Ararat composed of eternal ice, unbroken by a rock or stone. Towards the east the summit declined more gently than in any other direction, and was connected by a hollow, likewise covered with perpetual ice, with another rather lower summit, which, by Mr Federow’s trigonometrical measurement, was found to be 187 toises distant from the principal summit. On account of the immense distances, nothing could be seen distinctly. The whole valley of the Araxes was covered with a grey mist, through which Erivan and Sardarabad appeared as small dark spots ; to the south were seen more distinctly, the hills behind which lies Bayazeed ; to the N.W. the rugged top of Alaghes, covered with vast masses of snow, probably an inaccessible summit ; near to Ararat, especially to the S.E., and at a great distance towards the west, are numerous small conical hills, which look like extinct volcanoes ; to the E. S.E. was Little Ararat, whose head did not appear like a cone, as it does from the plain, but like

the top of a square truncated pyramid, with larger and smaller rocky elevations on the edges and in the middle ; but what very much surprised Professor Parrot, was to see a large portion of Lake Goktschai, which appeared in the N.E., like a beautiful shining dark blue patch, behind the lofty chain of mountains which encloses it on the south, and which is so high that he never could have believed he should have been able from the top of Ararat to see over its summit into the lake behind it. Dr Parrot having allowed himself time to enjoy this prospect, proceeded to observe his barometer ; which he placed precisely in the middle of the summit. The mercury was no higher than fifteen inches, three-fourths of a line, Paris measure, the temperature being three seven-tenths below the freezing point of the centigrade thermometer. By comparing this observation with that which Mr Fedorow made at the same time, at the convent of St James's, the elevation of the summit appears to be 10,272 Paris feet above the convent, and adding to that the height of the latter, the top of Ararat is 16,254 Paris feet, or nearly five wersts above the level of the sea. While the Professor was engaged in his observations, the deacon planted the cross, not precisely on the summit, where it could not have been seen from the plain, as it was only five feet high, but on the N.E. edge, about thirty feet lower than the centre of the summit. The Professor and his five companions, viz. the deacon, two Russian soldiers, and two Armenian peasants, having remained three quarters of an hour on the summit, commenced their descent, which was very fatiguing ; but they hastened, as the sun was going down, and before they reached the place where the great cross was erected, it had already sunk below the horizon. ' It was a glorious sight,' says the traveller, ' to see the dark shadows which the mountains in the west cast upon the plain, and then the profound darkness which covered all the valleys, and gradually

rose higher and higher on the sides of Ararat, whose icy summit was still illuminated by the beams of the setting sun. But the shadows soon passed over that also, and would have covered our path with a gloom that would have rendered our descent dangerous, had not the sacred lamp of night, opportunely rising above the eastern horizon, cheered us with its welcome beams.'

Having ascertained the spot where the ark rested after the deluge, we are prepared to form a probable conjecture concerning the place where Noah lived, anterior to that great calamity ; and where, by the command of Heaven, he built the ark. Though Adam and Eve were driven out of Paradise, no hint is given in the Sacred Scriptures of their being commanded to relinquish the country of Eden. It is therefore natural to suppose, that the first generations of men settled in that region, and in the countries around. That Noah had his residence in the neighbourhood of Paradise, may be inferred from his being the lineal descendant of them, who, after the condemnation and banishment of Cain, succeeded to all the rights and privileges of the first born, and, by consequence, to the family inheritance, on the death of Adam. From the conduct of Abraham to the sons of Keturah, it seems to have been the practice in the patriarchal ages, as in modern times (derived, it is probable, from the arrangements of Adam in his family), to send away the younger branches with a certain allotted portion, to form settlements for themselves, while the inheritance was reserved for the eldest son. If this remark be just, then Noah must have remained with Adam and Seth in the country of Eden, and succeeded to the inheritance after their decease. This is farther confirmed by the ark resting on the mountains of Ararat, which were at no great distance from Babylonia ; for it is by no means probable, that so large a vessel, of a form by no means adapted to sailing, and so deeply loaded, could per-

form a voyage of great length. But, whatever might be the distance it floated, its motion was towards the north ; because the inundation by which Assyria and the Gordiæan mountains were submerged, rushed in from the south, the Persian gulf, and the Indian ocean ; and because their heaviest rains are wafted on the winds of the humid south wind. This opinion is also confirmed from the testimonies of ancient writers, who assert, on the authority of certain public records deposited in a city of Mesopotamia, that Xisuthrus, who is no other than Noah, sailed from Assyria into Armenia.*

* We subjoin the following observations of Dr Kirby, as embodying in a small compass the arguments adduced by those who maintain that Ararat is in India :—The stream of interpreters, ancient and modern, place this mountain in Armenia ; but Shuckford, after Sir Walter Raleigh, seems to think that Ararat was farther to the east, and belonged to the great range anciently called Caucasus and Imaus, which terminates in the Himmaleh Mountains, north of India. This opinion seems to receive some confirmation from Scripture, for it is said, ‘ as they journeyed from the *east*, they found a plain in the land of Shinar. Now, the Armenian Ararat is to the *north* of Babylonia, whereas the Indian is to the *east*. Again, as the ark rested upon Ararat more than *ten* weeks before the tops of the mountains were seen, it seems to follow that it must have been a much higher mountain than the generality of those in the Old World. The modern Ararat (Agri-Dagh) is not *three* miles above the level of the sea, whereas the highest peak of the Himmaleh range, Dhawalagiri, is *five*, and the highest mountain in the known world, so that the tops of a great number of mountains would have appeared previously, had the ark rested upon the former Ararat, but not so if upon the latter.* The traditions also of various nations, given by Shuckford, add strength to this opinion. In addition to these, the following lines, quoted in a late article on Sanscrit Poetry, in the Quarterly Review, shew what was the creed in India on this subject :—

In the whole world of creation,
None were seen but these seven sages, Menu and the fish :
Years on years, and still unwearied, drew that fish the bark along,
Till at length it came where reared Himavan its loftiest peak :

* The exact relative heights of these mountains are thus given in feet :

Great Ararat, in Armenia,	-	-	-	17,700.
Little Ararat, in Armenia,	-	-	-	13,500.
Dhwalagiri, Himmaleh,	-	-	-	28,500.

See Professor Traill's Physical Geography, Murray's Encyclopædia of Geography, Malte Brun's Geography....*Editor*.

The species of wood of which the ark was fabricated, strongly corroborates the opinion that Noah lived before the flood, in the country of Eden. It is called in Scripture, Gopher wood.* Fuller rightly conjectures, from the word itself, that it is the cypress. The Greek word for cypress is *κυπαρισσος*; take away the termination, and *κυπα* remains, which has all the radical letters of the word Gopher, and differs but little from it in sound. Nor is any sort of wood more durable and lasting than the cypress. Thucydides informs us, that for this reason the Athenians deposited in coffins of cypress wood, the bones of those who had fallen in the wars of their country.† And the Scholiast observes upon the place, that these boxes, or coffins, were made of cypress, because it was not liable to rot.‡ It is extremely probable that the ark of Noah was built of the same durable material; for it is asserted by a great number of ancient writers, that some relics of it remained for several thousand years after the deluge. The learned and indefatigable Bochart also proves, by the testimony of Plato, Plutarch, and other writers, that the cypress wood is not only durable, but also fit for shipping; and that it abounds in Babylonia, and the surrounding countries. Hence, he informs us from Arrian, that the fleet which Alexander ordered to be built at Babylon, was all constructed of cypress wood;

There at length they came sailing; thus the fish addressed the sage:
Bind thou now thy stately vessel to the peak of Himavan,—
Bound the sage his bark; and even to this day the loftiest peak
Bears the name of Naubandhana.

Both these opinions (viz., that which places Ararat in India, as well as that which transfers it to Armenia), continues Dr Kirby, have their difficulties, which I shall not farther discuss, but leave the decision of the question to persons better qualified to direct the public judgment. I shall only observe, that perhaps the Indian station was more central and convenient for the ready dispersion of the men and animals over the world, than the Armenian one.—*Bridgewater Treatise*, vol. vi. p. 45.—*Editor*.

* Genesis vi. 14.

† Thucydides, lib. i. 94, 112.

‡ Bochart. *Phal. lib. i. cap. 4*, p. 23.

because the country produced few other trees fit for that purpose.* But it has been already shown, that the country of Eden lay on both sides of the river, formed by the united streams of the Euphrates and the Tigris ; and, therefore, partly within the limits of Babylonia. Noah, therefore, lived in Eden before the flood, and there built the ark of gopher, or cypress wood, with which that country abounds.†

* Rooke's Translation of Arrian, vol. ii. p. 178.

† See for a fuller account, Dr Wells' Hist. Geog. pp. 34, 35.



CHAPTER III.

THE LAND OF SHINAR, AND THE CITY AND TOWER OF
BABEL.

THE land of Shinar is that beautiful valley through which the rapid Tigris rushes from the mountains of Armenia to the sea. That this assertion is not lightly hazarded, will appear from the testimony of ancient writers, both sacred and profane. The prophet Isaiah mentions Shinar as one of the countries to which his people were carried captive; and by connecting it with Cush and Elam, seems to intimate that it was situated in their neighbourhood:—‘The Lord shall set his hand again the second time, to recover the remnant of his people—from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar.’* So convinced were the Seventy interpreters of this fact, that they render the term Shinar in this, and other passages, by the word Babylonia. In several parts of Scripture, Shinar is expressly called Babel. ‘The beginning of Nimrod’s empire was Babel, and Erech,† and Accad,‡ and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.’§ The tower of Babel was, according to Moses, built in the same country;|| and it received that name, ‘Because the Lord did there confound the language of the whole land.’ It is a fact which cannot be disputed, that the capital of Nebuchadnezzar’s empire was the renowned city of Babylon,

* Isaiah xi. 11.
§ Genesis x. 10.

† Aracca.—*Ed.*
|| Genesis xi. 2, 4, 9.

‡ Ctesiphon.—*Ed.*

and the prophet Daniel asserts, in explicit terms, that it was situated in the land of Shinar. 'In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem, and besieged it: and the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah, into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God, which he carried into the land of Shinar, to the house of his god.* From these quotations, it is indisputable, that the land of Shinar is the same country which afterwards received the name of Babylonia. The fact is confirmed by the testimony of uninspired authors. Abydenes, as quoted by Eusebius, observes, That Nebuchadnezzar having finished the Syrian war, magnificently adorned the temple of Belus with the spoils of the conquered nations. The same writer has preserved a fragment of Milesius, the ancient historian of Phœnicia, in which he asserts that Shinar belonged to Babylonia.

From the remarks of Ptolemy and other ancient geographers, it is probable, that to the land of Shinar belonged the whole country along the west bank of the Tigris, as far as the mountains of Armenia. In the opinion of some writers, the land of Shinar probably included the whole valley on both sides of the river, from the mountains of Armenia to the Persian gulf, or at least, to the southern division of the common channel of the Tigris and Euphrates.† It is however certain, that it extended all along the western bank of that river.‡

* Daniel i. 1, 2.

† Wells' Geog. vol. i. p. 32, &c.; Bochart. Phal. lib. i. c. 5, pp. 24, 25 [i. e. the whole region of Babylon and Mesopotamia].—Editor.

‡ The *Σεργγας όρος* of Ptolemy, Mount Singaras, a mountain, or rather a chain of mountains, situated in the north of Mesopotamia, obtained its name, according to Jerome and others, from *shen*, a tooth, and *naar*, to thrust out, i. e. because there the dispersion of the human race took place. Owing to the extraordinary fertility of this mountain range, for which it has in all ages been celebrated, it is thought to have anciently given its name to the whole surrounding country. It is thus described by Niebuhr:—'On the south side

Noah and his sons probably formed their first settlement after the flood, near the bottom of the mountain on which the ark rested in the northern parts of Shinar; and here the venerable patriarch spent the remainder of his days. For we have not the least evidence, that he had any concern in the building of the city and tower of Babel. The piety of his character must have led him strenuously to oppose the daring attempt of his degenerate offspring; and to remain at a distance from the scene of their wickedness.* To this proof of his continuing in the northern parts of Shinar, may be added, that Ptolemy mentions a city near the sources of the Tigris, under the name of Zama, which bears so great an affinity to Zem, or Shem, as to render it exceedingly probable, that Noah and his sons formed their first settlement near this place.

That the city of Zama derived its name from Shem, is evident from this consideration, that in the Arabic version, Shem is always called Sam or Zam.† Here the venerable father of the postdiluvian world restored the worship of Jehovah, and for three hundred and fifty years swayed the patriarchal sceptre over the virtuous part of his descendants. The rest of his sons, determined on the prosecution of their own presumptuous schemes, and unable to bear or subdue his firm opposition, withdrew from his presence, and, proceeding down the river, fixed on a particular place for their intended work, at a considerable distance from his residence.

So great was the impiety of these degenerate sons of Noah, and so regardless were they of the sure and awful proofs of the Divine jealousy, that they selected a spot within the limits of the land of Eden, and not

of our road from Mosul we saw Mount Sindjar. It lies in an extremely fruitful plain, and has a very fine and salubrious atmosphere. This, he adds in a note, 'is probably the Singara of Greek writers. The name has likewise a close resemblance to the Shinar of Scripture.'—*Travels*, vol. ii. p. 388.—*Editor*.

* Bochart. *Phal.* c. 10, p. 37.

† Wells' *Geog.* vol. i. p. 111.

far from the scene of the first transgression, for the renewal of that hostility with heaven which had cost their fathers so dear. They commenced their operations in the very place, or at least, in its immediate neighbourhood, where rose in future ages, the imperial city of Babylon, and by consequence, upon the original and natural stream of the Euphrates, at some distance from its confluence with the Tigris.

The time when the city and tower were built, may be inferred with sufficient certainty from these words of Moses :—‘ And unto Eber were born two sons, the name of one was Peleg ; for in his days was the earth divided.’* The meaning of the historian must be, that the earth was divided at the time Peleg was born ; for the name was given at his birth, in allusion to the signal occurrence which had then recently happened. But the inspired writer informs us in another passage, that Peleg was born an hundred years after the flood ; † therefore, in the same year, the building of the tower was interrupted, and the sons of Noah were scattered over the face of the earth.‡

The dispersion, however, affected only the irreligious part of Noah’s family ; for, as has been already remarked, it is not to be supposed that the patriarch himself, or Shem and others to whom the covenant was given, would engage in so wicked a scheme, or give it the sanction of their approbation. This idea receives great confirmation from the words of Moses, in which he characterizes the builders ‘ the children of men ;’ § for in the sixth chapter, the sons of God are opposed to the daughters of men, as believers in God to unbelievers. Moses, therefore, in using the term Adam, insinuates, that only the unbelieving part of Noah’s

* Peleg in the original signifies *division*.

† Genesis xi. 10-16. [Arphaxad was born 2 years after the flood ; from the birth of Arphaxad to that of Salah there was a period of 35 years ; from the birth of Salah to that of Eber, 30 ; from the birth of Eber to that of Peleg, 34 ; making in all 101 years.]—*Editor*.

‡ Bochart. *Phal. lib. i. c. 9, p. 36.*

§ Gen. xi. 5.

family were engaged in that act of rebellion. But, if the venerable patriarch and his religious offspring took no part in the crime, they suffered no part of the punishment in which their impious relations were involved. While the speech of the latter was confounded, the former retained their native language in all its purity, and transmitted it by Shem, Arphaxad, and Salah, to Heber the ancestor of Abraham, the renowned founder of the Hebrew nation. This was no other than the language which the descendants of Heber, in the line of Abraham, continued to speak for many generations, and in which the sacred books of the Old Testament were written.

While the presumptuous builders of the city and tower of Babel were, in the righteous displeasure of God, scattered over the face of the earth, the patriarch and his adherents remained undisturbed in their original settlements; for Ur of the Chaldees, where the ancestors of Abram resided, was not far distant from the Gordiæan mountains on which the ark rested. Ammianus mentions a city of this name, situated in the eastern parts of Mesopotamia, between the river Tigris and the city of Nisibis, about an hundred miles from those stupendous mountains, where, as shall afterwards be shown, the ancestors of Abraham certainly lived. To this may be added, the settlement of the sons of Shem, when the earth was divided, in Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Syria, of which the two first were the very countries where the ark rested, and Noah spent the remainder of his days. His descendants, therefore, in the line of Shem, were not, like the builders of Babel, compelled to leave their dwellings in search of new settlements, but spread over the countries which they previously occupied; which was not a punishment inflicted upon them for a crime in which they had no share, but the natural result, under the secret direction of providence, of an increasing population.*

* Bochart. Phaleg. lib. i. cap. 14, p. 47.

The design of the tower with which the founders of Babylon proposed to adorn their infant city, was not, as some writers have strangely imagined, to open a way for themselves into the mansions of eternal felicity; for it can scarcely be supposed, that so extravagant an idea could enter their minds, depraved and presumptuous as they were, much less that it could ripen into a regular plan of operation. The words in which they couched their daring resolution, 'Let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven,' mean no more than a tower of extraordinary height.* Such phrases may be found in every language; and their meaning can scarcely be misunderstood. When the messengers whom Moses employed to examine the land of Canaan, returned and made their report, they described the cities which they had visited, as great and walled up to heaven; and Moses himself, in his farewell address to the congregation, repeats it:—'Hear, O Israel, thou art to pass over Jordan this day, to go in to possess nations greater and mightier than thyself, cities great and fenced up to heaven.'† The meaning of the phrase plainly is, that the walls of those cities were uncommonly strong and lofty. That the builders of Babel meant no more, is farther evident from the words of Jehovah, recorded by Moses:—'Now nothing will be restrained from them which they have imagined to do.'‡ It is here plainly admitted, that the design was practicable, and would have been accomplished, if God had not thought proper to interrupt their operations. But to build a tower, the top of which should actually reach unto heaven, is beyond the power of mortals. The opinion of Josephus is not much more reasonable; that their design was to raise a tower higher far than the summits of the highest mountains, to defend them from the waters of a second flood, of which they were afraid. Had this been their design,

* Genesis xi. 4; Bochart. Phaleg. lib. i. cap. 14, p. 48.

† Deuteronomy i. 28, and ix. 1.

‡ Genesis xi. 6.

they would not have commenced their operations on the level plain, but on the top of Ararat, where the ark rested. They had the solemn promise of Jehovah, that he would no more destroy the earth by water ; and beheld the ratification of it in the radiant bow of heaven, placed in the cloud to quiet the fears of guilty mortals. If the Noachidæ had distrusted the promise and sign of heaven, they had not descended from the mountains, where only they could hope for safety from the strength and height of their tower, into the plains of Babylonia, and fixed their abode between two mighty rivers, to whose frequent inundations that province is exposed. Nor could they be so infatuated as to imagine, that a tower constructed of bricks, whether hardened in the sun, or burnt in the fire, could resist the waters of a general deluge, whose impetuous assault, as they must have well known, the strong barriers of nature could hardly endure. Equally inadmissible is the notion, that they constructed this tower to defend them from the general conflagration, of which they are supposed to have received some obscure and imperfect notices : for in the destruction of the world, who could hope to find safety in the recesses of a tower, or on the summit of the mountains ? they would rather seek for refuge from the devouring element, in the profound caverns of the earth.

But it is vain to indulge in conjectures, when the true reason is clearly stated in the page of inspiration : — ‘ Let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven ; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.’* These words clearly show, that their object in building the tower was to transmit a name illustrious for sublime conception and bold undertaking, to succeeding generations. In this sense, the phrase, to make one’s self a name, is used in other parts of Scripture. Thus, ‘ David got him a name when he returned

* Genesis xi. 4.

from smiting of the Syrians in the valley of salt ;'* and the prophet informs us, that the God of Israel 'led them by the right hand of Moses, with his glorious arm dividing the waters before them, to make himself an everlasting name.'† They seem also to have intended it as a beacon or rallying point, to their increasing and naturally diverging families, to prevent them from separating in the boundless wilderness into independent and hostile societies. This may be inferred from these words, in which they farther explain the motive of their undertaking :—' Lest we be scattered abroad on the face of the whole earth.' They seem to have anticipated the necessity, and dreaded the consequences, of dispersion ; and, like all who seek to avert evil by unlawful means, they hastened, by the rash and impious measure which they adopted, the very mischief they sought to avoid. To build a city and a tower was certainly no crime ; but to do this with a view merely to transmit an illustrious name to posterity, or to thwart the counsels of heaven, by attempting to prevent emigration, was both foolish and wicked, and justly excited the displeasure of the supreme Judge, who requires his rational creatures to acknowledge and to glorify him in all their undertakings.

It is by no means improbable, that this tower was also intended for idolatrous purposes. The worship of fire began in a very remote age, and most probably under the direction and among the rebellious followers of Nimrod. This idea receives no small confirmation from the numerous fire towers which in succeeding ages were built in Chaldea, where the sacred fire was kept, and the religious rites in honour of the sun were celebrated.‡ If this conjecture be well founded, it

* 2 Samuel viii. 13.

† Isaiah lxiii. 12.

‡ Bryant's Analysis, vol. i. p. 400. 'The city of Babylon,' says this learned writer, 'seems to have been a great seminary of idolatry ; for it was devoted to the worship of the sun, and originally

accounts in the most satisfactory manner for the sudden and effectual dispersion of the builders, visibly and strongly marking the first combined act of idolatry after the flood, of which we have any notice, with the displeasure of the true God. Guilty of the same crime which procured the sudden dispersion of the first settlers at Babel, was the restorer of that great city, when he proudly boasted, 'Is not this great Babylon which I have builded for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?''* and he was instantly visited with a similar punishment, but proportioned to the greater enormity of his transgression; for the place should have reminded him of the sin and punishment of his forefathers, and taught him to guard against the pride and vanity of his heart. Nebuchadnezzar was, for his wickedness, driven from his throne and kingdom, to dwell with the beasts of the field, and eat grass like oxen, 'till seven times passed over him;' till the sun had seven times passed over his appointed circuit, and he had learned 'that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.' But his irreligious ancestors were punished with dispersion, by confounding their language. Till this memorable event, the inspired writer assures us, the whole earth was of one language and one speech. When Jehovah came down to see the tower which the Babylonians were building, he said, 'Behold the people is one, and they have all one language.' They formed one great society, and conversed in the tongue which they had learned from those who lived before the flood; and which was the only language spoken on earth from the beginning of the world; for no hint of any confusion of language, or even material diversity of speech, before the build-

called,' evidently alluding to fire-worship, 'Bel-on, or the City of the Sun;' and the centre of this worship seems to have been the Tower of Babel, around which the city was built.—Vol. iii. p. 45.

* Daniel iv. 30.

ing of Babel, is given in the sacred volume. It is extremely natural to suppose, that the devout Seth, and his religious descendants, would preserve with care the family tongue in which God conversed with their renowned father ; in which the first promise was given to sinners, and many subsequent revelations were made. The language of our fathers is not easily changed, if we are so disposed ; but no man is willing to change it ; and a religious man will be yet more averse to relinquish a language which contains the only grounds of his hope, and that of the whole human race. We may therefore conclude, that since this language had so many claims on the affectionate care of Seth, he would certainly hand it down, with the gospel it contained, to his children, that they might teach it to succeeding generations, till it was received by his celebrated descendant Noah, the second father of our family. For the same reasons, which were daily receiving additional strength, Shem would preserve with pious care the sacred deposit, till he delivered it into the hands of Abraham, with whom he lived about two hundred years. The line of descent, by which the primitive language might be transmitted from Adam to Abraham, and from this patriarch to Moses, is short and straight ; for between Adam and Noah were only eight persons, and the father of Noah was fifty-six years old when Adam died. The only interruption is the confusion of tongues, which happened after the flood. But though God confounded the speech of mankind at Babel, it is not said he extinguished the general language ; nor that he confounded the speech of any but the colony at Babel. These only were in the transgression, and, therefore, these only were liable to the punishment. Noah, and the rest of his family, persevering in their dutiful obedience to God, undoubtedly retained their language, together with their ancient habitations.

It may be urged, that, by the testimony of Moses, the Lord confounded at Babel ' the language of all the

earth.' But the plain of Shinar could with no propriety be called the whole earth ; nor could the inhabitants of Shinar, by any figure of speech, be entitled to that name. If mankind were in possession of a great part of the globe when the tower was built, by what rule of justice could they be punished for a crime in which they had no share, and of which multitudes of the distant settlers could not even have heard ? ' Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right ? ' The truth of this history depends upon two terms, which admit of different senses. In the first verse of the eleventh chapter of Genesis, the sacred historian says, the whole earth was of one language and of one speech. The word *col* signifies *the whole*, and also *every* ; by *Arets* is often meant the *earth* ; it also signifies a *land* or *province*, and occurs frequently in this latter acceptation. In this very chapter, the region of Shinar is called *Arets Shinar*, the land or province of Shinar ; and the land of Canaan, *Arets Canaan*, the country of Canaan. The Psalmist uses both terms in precisely the same sense :—' Their sound is gone out into every land,' *Col Arets*.* The words of Moses, then, ought to be rendered, ' Therefore is the name of it called Babel ; because the Lord did there confound the language of the whole land.' If this view of the text be just, the dispersion was a partial event, and related chiefly to the sons of Cush, whose intention was to found a great, if not an universal, empire ; but by this judgment their purpose was defeated. The language of the whole country, Mr Bryant thinks, was confounded, by causing a labial failure, so that the people could not articulate.† It was not an aberration in words or language, but a failure and incapacity in labial utterance ; for God said, ' Go to, let us go down and confound, *shaphe*, their lip, that they may not understand one another's speech.' By this, their speech was confounded, but not altered ; for, as soon

* Psalm xix. 4.

† Analysis, vol. iii. p. 30-46.

as they separated, they recovered the true tenor of pronunciation ; and the language of the earth continued, for some ages, nearly the same. This appears, from many interviews between the Hebrews, and other nations, in which they spoke without an interpreter. Thus, when Abraham left his native country to sojourn in the land of promise, he conversed with the natives in their own language, without difficulty, though they were the descendants of Canaan, who, for his transgression at Babel, was driven, by the Divine judgments, from the chosen residence of his family. The Hebrew language, indeed, seems to have been the vernacular tongue of all the nations in those parts of the world ; for the patriarchs, and their descendants, so late as the days of Moses and Joshua, conversed familiarly with the inhabitants of Midian and Canaan, without the help of interpreters.

This argument receives an accession of strength, from the ideal character of the Hebrew language. It is admitted, that all languages participate more or less of the ideal character ; but it is one of the most remarkable circumstances by which the Hebrew is distinguished. A number of its words, as in other languages, are mere arbitrary signs of ideas ; but, in general, they derive their origin from a very few terms, or roots, that are commonly expressive of some idea borrowed from external objects ; from the human constitution ; from our senses or our feelings. The names of men, and of the lower animals, and the names of many places, particularly in the remoter ages, allude to some remarkable character in the creature named ; or, in reference to place, to some uncommon circumstance or event. Scarcely a proper name can be mentioned, which alludes not to something of this kind. To give a few examples :—Korè, the partridge, received its name from the verb Kara, to call, in imitation of the note which that bird uses in calling its young. The camel is in Hebrew, Gamal, from a verb of the

same form, which signifies to recompense, because that creature is remarkable for remembering and revenging an injury. The Hebrews call the scorpion *Akrab*, from two words which signify to kill one's father; now both Pliny and Aristotle inform us, that it is the character of that creature to destroy its own parents.*

But these names were imposed by Adam before the fall, for the sacred historian explicitly states, 'Whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that *was* the name thereof.'† The verb *was* is not in the original text; and, therefore, the sentence may run in the present, with equal propriety as in the past; and, indeed, according to the genius of the language, with more propriety in the present—that *is* the name thereof. Hence the names by which the lower animals were known in the days of Moses, were those which Adam gave them in Paradise; and as these are pure Hebrew, the legitimate conclusion is, that Hebrew was the language spoken by Adam before the fall.

The names which men and things received at the beginning of time, are so strikingly similar to those which they bore when Hebrew was certainly a living language, that its claim to the honour of being the primeval speech of the human family, can scarcely be rejected. It is ever reckoned a proof of similar origin, when many words in any two languages have the same form, the same sound, meaning and reason. But the names of the first generations of men, like those of the lower animals, are as pure Hebrew as the names of Peleg, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, or those of David and Solomon, or Malachi. They have the Hebrew form, are constructed according to Hebrew rules, are founded on certain reasons, like Hebrew names; and, in fine, are not to be distinguished in any one respect from pure Hebrew.

It deserves also to be remarked, that the reason assigned for these names will not correspond with any

* Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. ii. sec. 30.

† Genesis ii. 19.

other language. The garden of paradise was called Eden ; because among the Hebrews it signifies pleasure or delight. The place of Cain's exile was for this reason called the land of Nod, from a root which signifies to wander. Adam received his name, because he was taken out of the ground ; but if the term for ground in the first language had been terra, or $\gamma\eta$, or earth, there had been no propriety in the designation. Eve was called by this name, because she was the mother of all living ; but it is derived from a pure Hebrew verb which signifies to live ; and to this relation the name owes all its propriety and significance. Cain was named from the Hebrew verb Kana, to possess, because his mother had got him from the Lord ; and in this instance also, the name is inseparably connected with the Hebrew root. The proper name Seth* is derived from the Hebrew verb Shouth, to appoint ; because, said our first mother, God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel whom Cain slew.† The same mode of reasoning might be carried through all the names of the Adamitic age ; but these instances are sufficient to show the near affinity, if not the positive identity, of the language which Adam spoke, with the Hebrew of the Old Testament.

The names ascribed by the inspired writer to the founders of our race, are not interpretations of primitive terms ; for he declares they are the very names which were given at first ; and as they are derivatives from pure Hebrew verbs, the language then spoken must have been the same in substance and structure. Had they been translations, we have reason to think the same method would have been followed as in several instances in the New Testament, where the original term is used, and the interpretation avowedly subjoined. But Moses gives not a single hint of his translating these terms ; he asserts on the contrary, that they are the original words employed ; and the truth

* Heb. Sheth.

† Genesis iv. 25.

of his assertion is rendered indubitable by the reasons assigned for their imposition, which are inseparably connected with the Hebrew language. Nor does Moses, in the whole course of his history, when speaking of persons and places, utter a single word from which we can infer the existence of an earlier language.

When the minute and extensive acquaintance with the natural character and temper of the numerous animals to which our first father gave names in Paradise, which he certainly had not time to acquire by his own industry, and which we have no reason to believe he owed to intuition, is considered, we must admit, that the language in which he conversed was not his own contrivance, but the immediate gift of Heaven. When Jehovah breathed into Adam and Eve the breath of life, he inspired them at the same moment with a perfect knowledge of the tongue in which they were to express their thoughts. A similar favour was bestowed at the beginning of the New Testament dispensation, on the apostles and other ministers of the gospel, who were inspired in a moment with the perfect knowledge of many different languages. The builders of Babel, as might have been expected, were visited in a very different manner. Theirs was partly an inspiration in anger, which, instead of the common language, imparted for a time a number of new and strange sounds, which none but those who received them could understand. These new idioms or sounds, however, were not so numerous as the people assembled at Babel; for human society had then been completely at an end:—the father could not have associated with his child, nor the husband with the wife of his bosom; every individual, compelled to separate from the rest of the species, had taken up his solitary dwelling with the savage beast of the desert,—and the whole race, so far at least as it depended upon them, had speedily perished. It is therefore extremely probable, that every separate family, or those families that were ap-

pointed to coalesce into one colony in their future dispersion, had a peculiar dialect.

How far the Noachidæ proceeded in building the city and tower before the confusion of tongues, cannot be certainly known. It is probable, that the prodigious tower which stood in the middle of the temple dedicated to Belus, was the very same which was built there by Ham and his ambitious progeny. This is the more likely, because it is attested by several profane authors, that this tower was all constructed of bricks and bitumen; the same materials which, according to Moses, were used in building the tower of Babel.* This astonishing structure was, according to Herodotus, a furlong on each side at the base,† which was square, and a furlong in height;‡ on this another tower was built, and after this another, to the number of eight. If these eight towers, therefore, rose in the same proportion, the height of the whole building was eight furlongs or one mile. We read of no other structure ever executed by the hands of man that reached the fourth part of this immense altitude. The ascent to the top was by stairs winding round it on the outside; that is, says Rollin, there was perhaps an easy sloping ascent in the side of the outer wall, which, turning by very slow degrees in a spiral line, eight times round the tower from the bottom to the top, had the same appearance as if there had been eight towers placed upon one another. In these different stories were many large rooms, with arched roofs, supported by pillars. Over the whole, on the top of the tower, was an observatory, by the benefit of which the Babylonians became more expert in astronomy than all other nations.

The stupendous undertaking of the Noachidæ, to the progress of which the God of heaven put an effectual stop by the confusion of tongues, was long remembered in the East. The war of the giants with

* Genesis xi. 3.

† i. e. half a mile in compass.

‡ Estimated by Rennel at 500, and by Prideaux at 600 feet.

the Olympian Jove, so sweetly sung by the Roman poet, bears too striking a resemblance to be mistaken. In the hands of his muse, the sun-dried bricks of Shinar grew into solid and towering mountains, which men of gigantic size and daring ambition, with more than mortal strength, piled upon one another, in the vain and presumptuous hope of opening to themselves a way to the throne of the Almighty Thunderer.

‘ Neve foret terris securior arduus æther :
Affectasse ferunt regnum cœleste Gigantes
Altaque congestos struxisse ad sidera montes.
Tum Pater omnipotens misso perfregit Olympum
Fulmine et excussit subjecto Pelio Ossam.’

OVID.

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE DISPERSION OF MANKIND.

THE confusion of tongues was followed by the dispersion of mankind over the face of all the earth. This great and interesting work, however, was conducted by the Sovereign Disposer of all things, in a regular and orderly manner. Under his watchful and secret direction, the men of Babel, baffled in their presumptuous designs, together with numerous bands from the other families of Noah, who had learned from the lips of their common father the express command of God, to multiply and replenish the earth, migrated to those quarters of the globe, and those countries which had been allotted in the Divine counsels for their respective settlements. To this orderly distribution, the inspired historian seems to allude in his concluding remark on the settlement of the sons of Javan:—‘By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations.’* And for the same reason he concludes the account he gives us of the other branches of Noah’s family in similar terms. The words families and nations, are often used promiscuously in other parts of Scripture; but here they must have a distinct signification. The difference of construction plainly intimates, that families are in this

* Gen. x. 5, compared with Deut. xxxii. 8, Acts xvii. 26.

connexion subordinate to nations, as the parts of which nations are composed. The meaning of the sacred writer then, plainly is, that the sons of Noah were ranged according to their nations, and every nation was ranked by its families ; so that every nation dwelt by itself, and in every nation the tribes, and in every tribe the families of which it consisted, received their separate lots and lived by themselves.* Thus the settlement of the Noachidæ, after their dispersion at Babel, seems to have been conducted on the same principles, and in the same orderly manner, though not perhaps with all the formality, as that of the people of Israel long afterwards, in the land of Canaan.

The rule which the Divine Wisdom was pleased to follow in confounding their language, gives additional strength to this argument. The languages of the same branches had a nearer affinity to one another, than to those of any other branch of Noah's family. Those who spake the same language, naturally associated together ; and those who received a kindred tongue, and by consequence understood a little of the former, preferred their neighbourhood to that of a people with whose language they were totally unacquainted. Hence the first planters settled as well after their tongues, as after their families, and after their nations. The nations of the dispersion, on leaving the plain of Shinar, turned, by the immediate suggestion of heaven, to that quarter of the globe which had been allotted in the Divine purpose for their future residence ; but the affinity of the languages was perhaps the means which Jehovah employed to indicate the regions that were to be occupied by the subordinate branches of the general division. The unity of speech at Babel, which bound its inhabitants into one compact society, was extinguished, or more properly suspended, for a time ; but the affinities observable among the numerous dialects, which the confusion of languages produced,

* Wells' Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 60.

still operated as a general principle of connexion, in determining the relative situation of the different settlements.

Dr Wells has drawn an additional argument,—from the wisdom of the patriarchs, who were all alive at this division, and acted as kings in their generations. Considering the great difference of soil and temperature, in various regions of the earth, it was their part, he thinks, to prevent the contention among their sons, which such a difference might be naturally supposed to produce. This could be done only by instituting an orderly division ; and that either by casting lots, or choosing according to the order of their birth-right, after taking some general survey of a sufficient portion of the earth, and laying down distinct portions according to the number of the nations, then of families, &c. But it is much to be questioned, whether the patriarchs, in such circumstances, were able to make themselves understood to numerous bodies of their descendants, who no longer spoke the same language, or possessed sufficient authority over so daring and stubborn a race, to give effect to their decisions. The arrangement of the different settlements is rather to be ascribed to the immediate interposition of Heaven, who miraculously confounded the language of Ham and his sons, and expelled them, for their presumption, from the land of Shinar, where they had determined to take up their final abode ; while he divided the families of Shem and Japhet into separate communities, and conducted them, by immediate suggestions from above, towards the countries where he had appointed them to establish their permanent residence.

Of the three sons of Noah, Japhet was the first-born, though mentioned last in the sacred text. Moses says expressly, that Noah was five hundred years old, and begat Shem, Ham, and Japhet. And since Ham is declared in Scripture to be Noah's younger son,* the

* Genesis ix. 24.

three brothers must have been at different births ; therefore the historian must be understood to mean, that he began, in the five hundredth year of his age, to beget children, and in that year begat his eldest son. But * it is said that Shem was an hundred years old, and begat Arphaxad, two years after the flood. Now, had Shem been Noah's eldest son, he must have been an hundred and two years old at least, the second year after the flood ; for Noah begat his eldest son in his five hundredth year, and from thence to the flood were an hundred years ; for, according to Moses, in the six hundredth year of Noah's life the flood began. Therefore, if Shem was only an hundred years old, two years after the flood, it evidently follows, that Japhet must be the son whom Noah begat in his five hundredth year, and consequently must be older than Shem.† This argument seems completely to determine the controversy, which has been long maintained among interpreters, concerning the sense of the Hebrew text, Genesis x. 21, which, considered by itself, may signify either that Shem was the elder brother of Japhet, or that Shem was the 'brother of Japhet the elder.' The last now appears to be the true meaning, and is therefore justly preferred by the Septuagint, and our English translators.

The sacred historian begins his account of the descendants of Noah, with the sons of Japhet ; but for what reason he does so, is uncertain. It is evident he had no regard in his statement to seniority of birth ; for he gives us the line of Ham before that of Shem, who, by his express declaration, was the elder of the two brothers.

In the following sketch, I shall strictly adhere to the order of seniority, which requires us to begin with the descendants of Japhet. The region in which the sons of Japhet formed their first settlements, the sacred

* Genesis xi. 10.

† Wells' Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 57.

historian distinguishes by a general name,—‘the Isles of the Gentiles.’* The term which we render *isles*, originally signified the sea coast. In this sense it occurs in the prophecies of Isaiah respecting the captivity of Egypt and Ethiopia :—‘And the inhabitant of this isle shall say in that day, Behold, such is our expectation, whither we flee for help to be delivered from the king of Assyria.’† We find another instance in the reproof which Jeremiah addressed to his people :—‘And all the kings of Tyrus, and all the kings of Zidon, and the kings of the isles which are beyond the sea.’‡ Hence, by this phrase, the Hebrews meant not only those places which are on all sides surrounded by water, but also ports and harbours, and those countries which may be approached by sea. Now, such were in relation to them the countries of Europe, the peninsula of Asia, and the places on the east of the Euxine. These were the regions or habitations of the transmarine nations, which the Hebrews and Phœnicians regarded as barbarians. These, therefore, they called the isles of the Gentiles.§ In confirmation of this view, many passages of Scripture might be quoted ; but I shall produce only one from the prophecies of Isaiah, where, in reference to the calling of the Gentiles and the restoration of the Jews, the prophet foretells :—‘The Lord shall recover the remnant of his people from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.’|| In this remarkable prophecy, the islands of the sea (which are the same with the isles of the Gentiles) are distinguished from the other countries from whence the chosen people were to be recovered ; and, by consequence, may be justly reckoned the countries of Europe and the Lesser Asia. Nor is it reasonable to suppose, that the prophet, in his enumeration of the places where

* Genesis x. 5.

† Isaiah xx. 6.

‡ Jeremiah xxv. 22.

§ Michaelis Spicilegium, part i. p. 122.

|| Isaiah xi. 11.

the Gentiles were to be favoured with the glad tidings of salvation, would omit those countries where the gospel obtained its brightest triumphs, and which have continued, through every succeeding age, the principal seat of the christian church.*

We are, therefore, to look for the settlements of Japhet and his sons, chiefly in the countries of Europe and the Lesser Asia. The sons of Japhet mentioned by Moses, are seven, who were probably the founders of as many nations.

1. The descendants of Gomer, the eldest son of the family, settled in that part of the Lesser Asia, which, lying toward the north-east, comprehends the countries of Phrygia, Pontus, Bithynia, and a great part of Galatia. Josephus,† the celebrated Jewish historian, says expressly, that the Galatians who lived in this tract, were called Gomerites. Herodotus‡ mentions the Cimmerii as inhabiting the same region ; Pliny§ speaks of a town in Troas, a part of Phrygia, called Comara or Cimmeris ; and Mela, of the Comari :—names which are obviously derived from Gomer. Michaelis considers them as the founders of the Celtic nations ; and, in confirmation of his opinion, says that in their language they take the name of *Kymr* or Cimmerians.|| In allusion to the same Hebrew term, the learned Bochart imagines, that the Greeks gave the name of Phrygia to a considerable part of the Lesser Asia. The root Gamar, he observes, signifies to consume, and that its derivative Gumra or Gumro signifies a coal ; whence the Greeks, coming to know the import of these words, might thereby be induced to think that the name Gomer was imposed on these parts, as denoting a soil so black as if it had been burnt to a coal ; and by consequence, might be induced to impose on the same countries a

* Wells' Hist. Geog. vol. p. 60 ; Bochart. lib. iii. cap. 1, p. 147.

† Jewish Antiq. lib. i. cap. 7.

‡ Lib. iv. cap. 11, 12.

§ Natural History, lib. v. sec. 20.

|| Spicilleg. part i. p. 22 ;

Faber Pag. Idol. vol. iii. p. 447.

name of similar import, and call it *φρυγια*, Phrygia, or the burnt country, from *φρυγεω*, which in the Greek language signifies to roast. This conjecture carries along with it the greatest probability, both because there are instances of the same nature which may be pointed out in our progress, and because it is certain, that a part of this country the Greeks distinguished by a special name, *φρυγια κεκαυμενη*, burnt Phrygia.*

That Gomer obtained for his inheritance those parts of Asia Minor, seems to be confirmed by the settlements of his three sons within the general lot assigned to the whole nation. To Ashchenaz was allotted the Lesser Phrygia or Troas, from whom the river Ascanius, the province Ascania, and the Ascanian Isles, mentioned by Pliny, certainly derived their names.† The true situation of this branch of Gomer's family may be inferred, with no small degree of certainty, from a passage in the prophecies of Jeremiah, where, predicting the fall of Babylon by the arms of Cyrus, he issues this order from the mouth of Jehovah, 'Call together against her the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashchenaz.'‡ But Xenophon informs us, that Cyrus having taken Sardes, sent Hystaspes with an army into the *Phrygia that lies on the Hellespont*; and that Hystaspes, having made himself master of the country, brought along with him from thence, a great body of Phrygian horse and other soldiers, whom Cyrus united to his army, and conducted against Babylon.§ Hence, the kingdom of Ashchenaz lay in that part of Phrygia which is washed by the waters of the Hellespont and the Euxine Sea.

Rephat, the second son of Gomer, settled eastward from his brother in the adjoining country, which, according to Josephus, was from his name originally

* See also Wells' Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 62; Bochart. Phal. lib. iii. cap. 8. p. 171; Pliny's Natural History, lib. v. sec. 41, 42.

† Pliny's Natural History, lib. v. sec. 40, 41, 43.

‡ Jeremiah li. 27.

§ Anab. lib. i. cap. 2, sec. 2, &c.

called Riphatea, but known to the ancients by the name of Paphlagonia. A part of this people were also seated in Pontus and Bithynia; and the whole nation were at first called Rephathæ, and afterwards by contraction, Riphæi.*

Togarmah, the third son of Gomer, occupied the Greater Phrygia and a part of Galatia. The kingdom of Togarmah lay almost due north from Judea, on the shores of the Euxine, touching the east border of Rephat. This accords with the situation assigned to this family, both in the Sacred Scriptures and in profane writings. Their relative situation to Judea is distinctly marked by the prophet in these words:—‘Gomer and all his bands; the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands.’† And again, ‘They of the house of Togarmah traded in thy fairs, with horses, and horsemen, and mules.’‡ Togarmah, then, lay nearly due north from Judea; which is confirmed by every map of those regions: and we know from the testimony of many writers, that Cappadocia, which embraced a considerable part of the lot of Togarmah, was long celebrated for an excellent breed of horses and mules, and for expert horsemen. Some traces of the name of Togarmah may be discovered in the names by which some of the inhabitants of this tract were known to ancient writers. Strabo says the Trochmi dwelt in the confines of Pontus and Cappadocia. Ci-

* Bochart. Phaleg. lib. iii. cap. 10, p. 147; Wells’ Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 64; John Edward’s Perfection of Scripture, vol. iii. p. 66, &c. Some traces of this name may be found in the writings of the ancient Greeks and Romans. Apollonius, in his Argonautics, mentions a river called Rhebæus, which, rising in this tract, empties itself into the Euxine Sea. This is the river which is called by other writers Rhebas. Stephanus mentions both the river and a country of the same name, whose inhabitants were called Rhebæi. This is the people whom Pliny denominates (more agreeably to the name of their forefather), Riphæi. The settlements of these two brothers, Michaelis thinks, are involved in much uncertainty. — *Michaelis Spicilæg.* p. 66.

† Ezekiel xxxviii. 6.

‡ Ezekiel xxvii. 14.

cero calls them Trogmi ; and Stephanus, Trocmeni.* It is evident that all these names derive their origin from Togarmah ; for they retain all the radical letters of the name of their progenitor but one ; and though the Greeks, according to their usual custom, have transposed one of the letters, to render the sound more pleasing to their fastidious ear, still the affinity is obvious. Thus it is ascertained, from the true situation of the three great branches of Gomer's family, that his descendants occupied those countries which extend along the shores of the Hellespont and Black Sea.

But the sons of Gomer were not long satisfied with their original settlements ; large bodies of them crossed the straits in quest of new habitations, and gave their name to the Cimmerian Bosphorus (Palus Mæotis). From the strait of Caffa and the borders of this Bosphorus, they advanced along the banks of the Danube, till they took possession of the country, which from them has been called Gomerman, or Germany. In the word Cimbri, the name of a German tribe, and also, in their common name Germans, or as they call themselves Germen, which is but a small variation from Gemren (a plural ending in the German language), or Gomren, which last is easily contracted from Gomerren, that is, Gomeræans,—we can trace without difficulty, the primitive name of Gomer.

From Germany, the descendants of Gomer by degrees, spread into ancient Gaul, of which they were the aboriginal inhabitants. Their posterity received from the Greeks, the name of Galatæ or Kalatæ, and by contraction Keltæ, the Celtæ of the Latins, and the Celts of modern times. That the Gauls or Celtæ were Cimmerians or descendants of Gomer, is attested by Appian in the clearest terms ; the Celtæ or Gauls, says he, were otherwise called Cimbri : and Plutarch asserts, that the Cimbri are called Galloscythians.†

* Wells' Geog. vol. i. p. 65 ; Strabo, lib. iv. p. 131 ; Bocharti. Phal. lib. iii. cap. 11, p. 177.

† Quoted by Bochart. Phal. lib. 3.

From the opposite shores of Ancient Gaul, the Gomeræans, or Cimbri, passed over into Britain; for it cannot be doubted that the British isles were peopled from the nearest points of the neighbouring coast. To prove beyond a doubt, that the ancient Britons were the lineal descendants of Gomer, no other evidence need be produced, than the very names by which the Welsh continue to distinguish themselves from the rest of the nation: they call themselves Kumero or Cymro, and Kumeri; in like manner, they call a Welsh woman Kumeræs, and their language Kumeræg. These are terms which exhibit an undeniable affinity to the primitive name of Gomer, and clearly prove their descent from that patriarch. The inhabitants of Cumberland also retain the name of their progenitor; they were at first called Cimbri or Cumbri, and afterwards Cambri; and Cumberland itself is the land of the Cumbri, Cimbri, or Gomeræans.

But the Welsh, and the inhabitants of Cumberland, are not the only descendants of Gomer in the British isles. It is well known that the Saxons, and especially the Angles, were near neighbours to the Cimbri; and if it be admitted that Germany was peopled by the sons of Gomer, then the German tribes, the Saxons and Angles, who drove back the ancient Britons into the mountains of Wales, are branches from the same root, equally descended from the eldest son of Japhet.*

As the descendants of Gomer established themselves in the northern regions of the Lesser Asia, so the nation of Javan settled in the southern parts of the same country. This fact is ascertained from the situation of his four sons, Elisha, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim. Tarshish, the second son of Javan, settled in Cilicia, a country lying in the south-eastern part of Asia Minor. The whole country, says Josephus, was anciently called Tarshish, from the founder of the kingdom, and its capital city Tarsus.†

* Wells' Hist. Geog. vol. i. pp. 66, 67.

† Ibid. p. 69.

The city of Tartessus in Spain, and the adjoining territory, so highly celebrated by the ancients for its riches, was a colony of Tarshish ; for the name Tarshish, is by an easy and frequent change, turned into Tartish, from whence it is easy to form Tartessus. Besides, the learned Bochart* has observed, that Polybius, reciting the words of a league made between the Romans and Carthaginians, mentions a place under the name of Tarseium ; and Stephanus expressly says, that Tarseium was a city near the pillars of Hercules ; a situation which corresponds sufficiently with the site of Tartessus. To this city, the prophet undoubtedly alluded in his address to Tyre :—‘ Tarshish was thy merchant, by reason of the multitude of all kinds of riches ; with silver, iron, tin, and lead, they traded in thy fairs.’† Tartessus was long renowned for its various and abundant riches ; and Spain, it is well known, formerly abounded in the metals enumerated by the prophet.

It appears from several notices in the sacred writings, that the descendants of Tarshish were the most expert seamen, and consequently, the principal merchants of those remote ages. Hence, they gave the name of their progenitor first to the sea of Cilicia, which washes the shores of their original settlements, and afterwards, to the whole expanse of the Mediterranean, which seems to have been called for several ages the Sea of Tarshish. The extent of their commerce, and the length of their voyages, were sufficiently great to give a distinctive name to ships of a certain form and burthen, though they neither belonged to the sons of Tarshish, nor navigated the sea which bore their name. Vessels of a greater burthen, and intended for longer voyages, were built in imitation of theirs, and called ships of Tarshish. This is perhaps the true reason why Solomon’s fleet was called a navy of Tar-

* Phaleg. lib. iii. cap. 7. p. 165.

† Ezek. xxvii. 12.

shish;* and the ships which Jehoshaphat ordered to be built, ships of Tarshish.† The fleets of these princes were stationed at Eziongaber, on the Red Sea; and by consequence, they neither navigated the sea of Tarshish or Mediterranean, nor traded to Tartessus or any of the settlements formed by that people, but to some port in Africa or the East Indies; the only countries that produced the commodities, ivory, apes, and peacocks, with which they returned to Palestine, after a coasting voyage of three years.

To the west of Tarshish, and adjoining to it, lay the settlements of Kittim or Cittim, the descendants of Kittim or Ceth, the son of Javan. In this quarter, according to Ptolemy, was the country of Cetis; and Homer mentions in the Odyssey, a people whom he calls Cetii, who are supposed to derive their name from the river Cetius, which flowed through their country.‡ In perfect agreement with Homer, the Seventy interpreters render Kittim by Κητιοι, Ketii or Cetii; and therefore, it is probable, that both people and river took their name from Kittim, the son of Javan.

Colonies of the same people crossed the Hellespont and settled in Greece. In the book of Numbers it is predicted, 'ships shall come from the coasts of Chittim:' by which the Greeks and Seleucidæ who chastised the Hebrews and Assyrians, are generally understood. In the first book of Maccabees, the king of Macedon is called the king of Shittim. Several bodies of this nation settled in Cilicia; on account of which, it is called in Scripture the land of Chittim,§ and because from that country Alexander marched to the memorable siege of Tyre.||

The posterity of Ceth, or the Kittim, seem to have colonized the neighbouring isles of Crete and Cyprus; for Ptolemy mentions the city of Cyteum in the for-

* 1 Kings x. 22.

† 1 Kings xxii. 48.

‡ Lib. xi. line 520.

§ Isaiah xxiii. 1.

|| John Edward's Perfection of Scripture, vol. iii. p. 70.

mer, and Strabo the city of Citium in the latter : and Josephus relates that Cetios was the Greek name of Cyprus itself ; from whence, says he, all the Greek isles were called Chittim.*

It is evident from the following passage in Daniel, that Italy was indebted for her inhabitants to the same people :—‘ The ships of Chittim shall come against thee.’† The Roman fleets are certainly meant in this prediction, but they might sail to the attack of Antiochus from Cilicia, in whose harbours they were commonly stationed to command the Mediterranean. The most probable opinion, and one that puts an end to the disputes of commentators and critics on that passage of the prophet, is, that colonies of this people were settled in both Greece and Italy, and consequently, whether the Roman fleet sailed from the Tiber, or some harbour in Cilicia, it might still be truly called the ships of Chittim.‡

On the western coast of Asia Minor, inclining to the south, were the original settlements of Elisha, another of the sons of Javan. We can discover some traces of his name in the *Æloes* or *Æolians*, who were anciently settled in the neighbourhood, and who are expressly affirmed by Josephus to have been descended from Elisha. From the opposite coast of Asia Minor, Elisha, probably in the train of his father Javan, passed over into Greece, and finally settled in that country. From Javan the country of Ionia certainly took its name ; and the *Iones* or *Iaones* of Homer and Strabo derived their origin.§ Josephus asserts, that from Javan came Ionia, and all the Greeks ; and Greece is expressly called Javan in the prophecies of Daniel.||

The sons of Elisha seem to have occupied in their

* Antiquities, lib. i. c. 6, sec. 1.

† Daniel xi. 30.

‡ Bochart. Phal. lib. iii. c. 5, p. 157, and Michaelis Spicil. p. 103.

§ Iliad, lib. xiii. line 685 ; lib. ix. p. 272.

|| Dan. x. 20, and xi. 2 ; Antiq. lib. i. c. 6, sec. 1 ; see also Wells' Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 70 ; Bochart. Phal. lib. iii. c. 3, p. 153, and c. 4, p. 155.

passage from Asia to Europe, the principal isles of the Grecian Archipelago; for the prophet Ezekiel calls them the isles of Elisha. That he alludes to these isles, is evident from what he says of the blue and purple fabrics which constituted the principal part of their trade with Tyre; for we know that they were long celebrated for the richness and brilliancy of their blue and purple dyes.*

The Greeks were reminded of their descent from Elisha by the name 'Ελλάς, which for many generations belonged to all the nations of Greece. They could trace their origin also, in the city and province of Elis in the Peloponnesus, in the city of Eleusis in Attica, and in the river Elissus or Ilissus in the same province; and as many believe, in the Elysian fields, that were so long one of the favourite themes of their enraptured bards.

'On the same western coast, south of the family of Elisha,' says Dr Wells, 'may the family of Dodanim be supposed to have first planted itself. For there we find in ancient writers a country called Doris, which may not improbably be derived originally from Dodanim; especially if this be a plural, as the termination seems to import; and so the singular was Dodan, which being softened into Doran, the Greeks might easily frame from thence Dorus, whom they affect to have been the father of the Dorians.' This writer thinks that the carelessness of some transcriber, by changing the Daleth into Resh, than which nothing can be more easy, converted the Hebrew word Dodanim into Doranim, which the Greeks transformed into Doros or Dore: and consequently the Dore among the Greeks, mentioned by Moses under the name Dodanim, being descended from Javan, must have had their first settlement in Doris, a province of the Lesser Asia.†

* Elis or Hellas, was a port in Peloponnesus, whence some of the shells were obtained that formed the dye.—*Wilde*, vol. ii. p. 113.—*Ed.*

† Wells' Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 71.

But if the Greeks converted Dodanim into Dore, it is natural to suppose they would never return to the original term, nor use any word derived from it. How then are we to account for the manifest traces of this term in Epirus, and part of Peloponnesus? The city of Dodona in Epirus, where Jupiter had one of his most celebrated oracles, and from whence he borrowed one of his designations, Dodonæan Jove, bears indubitable marks of the ancient and primitive Dodanim. It is not improbable, that Dodanim and his sons, after leaving Babel, or the interamnian region in a part of which it was built, remained some time in Asia Minor, and perhaps formed a permanent establishment in the neighbourhood of his brother Elisha; but they seem to have left no certain traces behind them, till they finally settled in Epirus and the Peloponnesus.*

The Dorians, it is probable, were originally a Phœnician colony, that settled in Greece, in ages long posterior to the confusion of tongues. We find in that country the maritime city Dora, or Doro, in the neighbourhood of Carmel, between Ptolemais and Cesarea. Dore appears, from the books of Joshua and Judges, to have been a royal city, and one of the most ancient in Phœnicia. It was so strongly fortified, that the tribe of Manasseh to whose lot it fell, were not able to take it, and expel the inhabitants; though they forced them at last to pay them a yearly tribute. The original inhabitants of this ancient and powerful city, Pausanias expressly calls Dorians; and since Cadmus

* The *Dodanim*, mentioned, Genesis x. 4, as the immediate descendants of Javan, are, by the Septuagint translators, denominated *Ροδῖοι*, or Rhodians. The Samaritan Pentateuch also agrees with the Septuagint in this rendering. Jerome, Eusebius, and Isidore coincide in the opinion, that the first inhabitants of this island, after the flood, were the Dodanim or Rhodanim. Other learned authors assent to the reading of Rhodanim for Dodanim, but think it doubtful whether these were not the ancestors of the Gauls, who settled near the mouth of the Rhone, and in the vicinity of Marseilles, where a district and city were anciently known by the name Rhodanusia.—*Bib. Keepsake*, 1837.—*Editor*.

and other Phœnicians settled in Greece, and introduced among its barbarous tribes the first rudiments of learning and civilization, it is extremely probable, that the Dorians of Greece derived their origin from that renowned city.

From the nations of Gomer and Javan, by whom the countries of Europe were peopled, we now proceed to make a few remarks on the posterity of Tubal and Meshech. These nations are commonly mentioned together by Moses, and other inspired writers ; from whence it may be reasonably concluded, that they occupied adjoining territories.*

The first settlements of Meshech were contiguous to the nation of Gomer on the east, and situated in Cappadocia and Armenia. These were probably the same people whom the Greeks denominated Moschi, from Mosoch, as the name Meshech is read by the Seventy, and other interpreters, who were seated in these countries, and from whom the neighbouring ridge of hills undoubtedly took the name of the Moschic mountains.†

Along the northern boundary of Meshech, extended the plantations of his brother Tubal, the father of the Albani, Chalybes, and Iberi, who, says the Jewish historian, were originally called Thobeli, from Tubal, the founder of their family. In this country, Ptolemy places the city Thabilaca, which is evidently derived from Tubal. In the opinion of Mede, the Alybe mentioned by Homer in his second Iliad, lay in this quarter, to which he traces the name of Albania, which, in succeeding ages, distinguished a part of Tubal's inheritance. Alybe he conceives to have been a name corrupted from Abyle, and this from Tabyle, an easy derivative from Tubal. In like manner, Bochart supposes the Tibareni, a people mentioned by old authors in this tract, to have derived their name from Tubal,

* Bochart. *Phal. lib. iii. c. 12, pp. 179, 180.*

† Wells' *Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 81.*

by the change of *l* into *r*, by a very common mutation in ancient times. Their settlement in this country is farther confirmed by the following passage of Ezekiel:— ‘Tubal and Meshech, they were thy merchants; they traded in the persons of men and vessels of brass, in thy market.’* The words of the prophet entirely agree with the accounts which ancient writers give us of Cappadocia, and other regions of Pontus, where the inhuman traffic in slaves was carried on to a great extent, and the best sort of brass known in those times was produced. Bochart observes, that the Hebrew word translated in this place brass, is sometimes rendered *steel*; and hence he remarks, that, as a piece of iron or brass is, in the Arabic tongue, called Tubal (probably from its coming out of the country of Tubal), so it is likely that, from the excellent steel which was made in this country, some of its inhabitants were distinguished by the name of Chalybes among the Greeks; the word Chalybs, in the Greek language, signifying *steel*.†

The Spanish nation claims the honour of being descended from Tubal; and, if it be considered that their country was known to the ancient Greeks by the name of Iberia, and to distinguish it from Asiatic Iberia, by the peculiar designation of Celtiberia; and that some remains of this ancient name are still preserved in Ebro, the name of a river in Spain, from Iberus, the name which it received from the Greeks and Latins,—their claim seems to be well founded.‡

Some of the posterity of Meshech penetrated into the wilds of Scythia, and peopled the dreary regions of the farthest north; for Meshech and Tubal, in the prophecies of Ezekiel, are sometimes expressive of that vast country;§ and, in another passage, they are joined with Magog, whom the sacred writer styles ‘the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal;’ or, as it is

* Ezekiel xxvii. 13.

† Bochart. Phal. lib. iii. c. 12, p. 180.

‡ Wells’ Hist. Geog. vol. I. p. 82.

§ Ezekiel xxxii. 26.

in the margin, the prince of the chief of Meshech and Tubal. In other translations, and particularly in the Septuagint, it is thus rendered, 'The prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal;' for the Hebrew word Rosh may be considered either as an appellative, or as a proper name. The learned Bochart has observed, from the Nubian geographer, that the river in Armenia, called by the Greeks Araxes, is by the Arabians called Rosh; and, from this and other instances of a similar nature, he not only infers that the people that lived on the banks of that river, were probably denominated Rosh, but also proves, from Josephus Bengorion, that a people did exist in those parts, under the name of Rossi. Intimately connected with the Rossi, was the other colony of Meshech or Mosoch, called by the Greeks Moschi, the progenitors of the modern Muscovites. As these tribes had lived in the neighbourhood of each other, before they left their settlements in Asia, so, preserving the relations of amity in their long and perilous journey, they finally settled in the same region: the Moschi, in the country which boasts of the far-famed Moscow, the ancient capital of the Russias; and the Rossi, in the adjoining provinces of the south. These circumstances render it extremely probable, that the Muscovites and Russians in Europe, were colonies of Meshech, or jointly of Meshech and Tubal.*

The inheritance of Magog, another branch of the same family, is placed, by the concurring voice of antiquity, north of Tubal, on the east and north-east shores of the Euxine. Magog is generally reckoned the father of the Scythians that occupied those countries; for Pliny assures us, that Scythopolis and Hierapolis, which those Scythians took when they conquered Syria, were ever afterwards called Magog. Ptolemy grants, that the proper name of Hierapolis was Magog. This fact is confirmed by Josephus, who says, that the Scythians were called Magog by the Greeks; and from

* Bochart. Phal. lib. iii. cap. 12, p. 180.

that circumstance infers their lineal descent from Magog, the son of Japhet.*

The situation of Magog, on the north-east of the Euxine, is confirmed by the following words of Ezekiel :—‘ Set thy face against Gog, in, or of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal.’† From these words, no doubt can be entertained that the land of Magog lay very near the countries of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, which, from the statements already made, it could do only on the north. Mede has observed, that the names Gog and Magog have the same signification; and he conceives that it pleased the Spirit of God to distinguish in this manner between the land and the people of the land, by calling the people Gog, and the country the land of Magog.‡

Bochart conjectures, that the mountains of Caucasus derived their name from Gog, who was the first that settled on their stupendous range, or in the circumjacent countries. He observes, that these words, Gog-chasan, denote, in the neighbouring oriental tongue, as much as Gog’s fort; and from Gog-chasan, the Greeks framed the name *Καυκάσος*, Caucasus.§

Strabo mentions a country in the neighbourhood of Caucasus, under the name of Gogarene, which is a manifest derivation from Gog; but whether Georgia, the name of a considerable kingdom on that vast ridge, can, as Dr Wells supposes, be traced to the same root, is too problematical to merit farther attention. It is far more probable that the Magini, a people about the river Tanais, mentioned by that geographer, was a scion from the stock of Magog; for the transition from Magog to Magogini, and from thence, by abbreviation, to Magini, is neither long nor difficult.

* Antiquities, book i, chap. 6, sec. 1.

† Ezekiel xxxviii. 2.

‡ Wells’ Hist. Geog. vol i. p. 83.

§ Bochart. Phal. lib. iii. cap. 13. p. 186; [Porter’s Trav. vol. ii. p. 536; Mem. de l’Acad. des Inscip. vol. xxi.; Rennel’s Geography of Herod. p. 152.]—Editor.

In the opinion of Michaelis, Gog and Magog are the Tartar tribes that inhabit the country which lies between the kingdom of Persia on the north, and the Caspian sea on the west.* It is extremely probable, from a passage in the prophecies of Ezekiel, that they denote the Scythians, who were greatly celebrated for their skill in the use of the bow. 'I will smite,' said the prophet to Gog, 'thy bow out of thy left hand, and will cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand.†

The third son of Japhet was Madai, who is almost universally believed to have been the father of the Medes; for, in the prophecies of Isaiah and other parts of Scripture, Madai is the Hebrew word for Media.‡ Mr Mede, however, is of a different opinion, because the country of the Medes, mentioned in other places of Scripture, lay so far to the north-east of the Holy Land, and therefore of Egypt, that the way of travelling from the one to the other was by land and not by sea; and, consequently, the said Media cannot be tolerably comprehended under the names of the isles of the Gentiles, which are the countries expressly said by Moses, in the place where he professedly speaks of the first plantations of mankind, to be divided or possessed by the sons of Japhet. Another argument adduced in support of his opinion is, that by this arrangement the lot of Madai seems to have been wholly separated from the lots of the rest of his brethren, and so to have lain not within the general lot of the nation of Japhet his father, but within the general lot of the nation of Shem.§

But these arguments, though possessed of considerable weight, ought not to determine the judgment in opposition to the authority of Moses. The rules which

* Michaelis Spicilegium, p. 34.

† Wells' Historical Geography, vol. i. p. 85.

‡ Bochart. Phal. lib. iii. c. 14, p. 193; Bedæ Opera. lib. ii. c. 10.

§ Mede's Works, Discourse 48, book i. p. 375.

an author has framed with the greatest care, may admit of exceptions, and the most plausible theory should certainly yield to indubitable and stubborn facts. The inspired writer places Madai in the line of Japhet, but is totally silent about another person of that name, who, Mr Mede supposes, might have descended from Shem. No writer, sacred or common, takes notice of such a person ; his existence, therefore, is a mere gratuitous supposition, assumed to cover the defect of a plausible and favourite theory. If the inspired writer has enumerated the founders of all the other nations on the face of the earth, why, it may be asked, has he omitted the father of so considerable a nation, and one destined to act so conspicuous a part on the theatre of the world, as the Medes? Is it probable, as Mede seems to think, that their progenitor was some obscure individual, posterior to the times of Moses, and therefore not mentioned in his writings? If the supposed Madai of the house of Shem was not in existence till after the death of Moses, how are we to account for the total silence of the other inspired writers, in relation to this person, who so frequently speak of the nation and affairs of the Medes? The general opinion then seems to be just, that the nation of the Medes trace their descent up to Madai the son of Japhet. The argument that his inheritance must then be separated from his brethren, and placed within the general lot of Shem, is not conclusive ; for it is only an exception to the general rule : and a similar exception occurs in the arrangement of the twelve tribes of Israel in Canaan ; for the ' inheritance of Simeon was within the inheritance of the children of Judah.'*

Mr Mede has justly remarked, that the country of the Medes cannot with propriety be comprehended under the name of ' the isles of the Gentiles,' for the way to Media from Egypt and Palestine, is by land and not by sea. But even this is no valid objection ;

* Joshua xix. 1.

because the words of Moses only point out the general possessions of Japhet, without regard to some accidental deviations. Nor can the settlements of Madai be justly viewed in the light of a total departure from the general rule; for, though his posterity fixed their first and principal seats in Media, they were not long in sending out colonies, that by the admission of Mr Mede himself, penetrated into Macedonia; and this country he considers as their proper inheritance, their earliest and their final abode. But Macedonia is fully comprehended within the circle allotted by the sacred writer, under the name of the isles of the Gentiles, to the sons of Japhet.

That Macedonia was originally peopled by the sons of Madai, has been proved from the ancient name of the country, *Æmathia* or *Æmadia*, which is evidently the same with Madai, the Greeks in admitting it into their language, prefixing a diphthong to improve the sound. The fact is confirmed by the discovery of a people in this region that were called *Μῆδοι* Medi, or *Μαῖδοι* Moedi. Aristotle, adds Mr Mede, in his book of Strange Reports, speaks of *Χώρα Μηδική*, the Medic region in the borders of Paconia; and hereabout was the *Præfectura Medica* of Roman story.

The Mæssians in Europe, Mr Mede supposes, were descended from that patriarch; and Bochart thinks, that the Samaritans were a colony of the eastern Madai; for the name of the Samaritans, he conjectures, was originally composed *Sear*, or *Sar-Madai*, which, in the oriental languages, denotes the remnant or posterity of the Medes.*

The last son of Japhet is Tiras, who is universally allowed to be the progenitor of the Thracians. The Greeks adapted the original term to their language, by changing it into Thrax, in which the affinity may still be discerned. But the relation of the Thracians to Tiras, is more clearly proved from several names

* Wells' Historical Geography, vol. i. pp. 87, 88.

which were long retained in that country. Several ancient writers inform us of a river, a bay, and a harbour, which all bore the name of Athiras; and they mention a city in the peninsula of Thrace, named Tyristasis, a district called Thrasus, and a people called Trausi.

The sons of Tiras, it is generally believed, not long after their settlement in Thrace, sent a colony who took possession of the opposite country, on the north side of the Euxine. Both the Greek and Latin writers mention a considerable river under the name of Tiras, which entirely preserves the memory of the Thracian patriarch, the founder of the nation. On the banks of this river, supposed to be the Niester, formerly stood a city which also received the name of Tiras. The inhabitants of the same country were distinguished by the name of Tyretæ or Tyragetæ: the former, probably the true descendants of Tiras; the latter a mixed race from the intermarriages of the Tyretæ and the Getæ, a neighbouring people, who were descendants, perhaps, of Cetim that settled in Macedonia.*

But the original settlement of Tiras, Dr Wells places on the shores of the Lesser Asia, opposite to Thrace, the scene of the long and arduous struggle between the Greeks and the Trojans, his lineal and original offspring. He thinks it not improbable, that Tros, the name of the first king of Troy, containing all the radical letters of Tiras, was either Tiras himself, or one of his early descendants.

Bordering on the nation and families of Gomer, to the east and the south, were the first plantations of the sons of Shem. The family of this patriarch, according to Moses, consisted of five sons: Elam, and Ashur, and Arphaxad, and Lud, and Aram.

As the youngest branch of this family took possession of the countries adjoining to the nations which sprang

* Wells' Historical Geography, vol. i. p. 80; Bochart. Phal. lib. iii. cap. 2, p. 151.

from the loins of Tiras, the last of the sons of Japhet, whose situation we have endeavoured to ascertain, it may be proper to begin with an account of his settlements. In the general division of the earth, the countries of Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Syria fell to the share of Aram. From him, Armenia probably took its name. Mesopotamia, so called by the Greeks from its situation between the noble rivers the Euphrates and the Tigris, was known to the Hebrews by the equally significant name of Aram-Naharaim, Aram between the two rivers. The lower parts of Mesopotamia, like Arabia Deserta to which it extends, is a dreary and sterile waste; but the upper part of the country which borders on Armenia, is exceedingly fruitful and pleasant. It is this rich and delightful region which the sacred writers distinguish by the appropriate name of Padan-Aram, or Sedan-Aram; words of the same import, denoting fruitful or cultivated Aram.*

The number of Aram's original settlements was four, corresponding to the number of his sons, Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash. The eldest brother Uz, is generally regarded by the ancients as the builder of Damascus; from whence it may be reasonably supposed, that the circumjacent country, including a considerable district in Arabia Deserta, is the land of Uz mentioned in the Scriptures, and celebrated for the severe and protracted sufferings of the patient and venerable Job. The prosperity of Damascus, the first undertaking of Aram deserving of notice, and the capital of his kingdom, corresponded with the beauty and fertility of the country where it is situated. It became the seat of a powerful government, that ruled over the kingdom denoted in Scripture by the name of Aram-Damasek, or Syria of Damascus, which was long the scourge and terror of the surrounding nations. The possessions of Aram comprehended only a part of Syria Proper;

* Bochart. Phaleg. lib. ii. c. 3. p. 75; Wells' Geog. vol. i. p. 92.

for Phœnicia and Palestine, both of which were reckoned parts of Syria, belonged to the descendants of Canaan.*

The family of Hul, or more agreeably to the original word Chul, has been placed with great probability in Armenia, particularly in Armenia Major. Beside the names of many places beginning with the radical letters of Chul, we find a province in Armenia under the name of Cholobetene, which is a manifest corruption of Cholbeth, the house or dwelling of Chol. This circumstance renders it extremely probable, that Chul and his family settled in that part of the country.

The inheritance of Mash lay between Hul to the north, and Uz to the south, near the mountain Masius; which probably owed its name to this descendant of Aram. In this mountain are the sources of the river Masca, one of the streams which wind through the rich and beautiful country of Mesopotamia; and the people of the adjoining country are by Stephanus expressly called Masieni or Masiani. All these are reasonable indications that here was the original settlement of Mash.†

Gether, the remaining son of Aram, seems to have chosen Albania for the place of his abode; for Ptolemy mentions an Albanian city which formerly bore the name of Getaræ, and a river of the same country named Getras; which bear so striking an affinity to Gether as to render it probable that this was the first settlement which he formed.

Ashur, as the name sufficiently proves, was the founder of the Assyrian monarchy. This kingdom is not the same with that vast and powerful empire, whose foundations were laid in Babylon, by the genius and ambition of Nimrod. It lay on the east of the Tigris in western Assyria, the capital of which was the renowned city of Nineveh; and was afterwards distinguished by the name of Adiabene, from two rapid and

* Bochart. Phal. lib. ii. c. 8. p. 80.

† Ibid. lib. ii. c. 11. p. 83.

turbulent rivers, the Diavas and the Adiavas, which intersected the country.*

The true situation of Elam is easily determined, both by the authority of Scripture and the concurrent testimony of heathen authors. The sacred writers frequently speak of a people near the Persian gulf, beyond the Tigris or Euphrates, by the name of Elam ; and profane authors, of a country there called Elymais, and a city of the same name. Like many other names Elam is sometimes taken in a more restricted sense, in which it is distinguished from Susiana and the other provinces ; sometimes in a larger sense, so as to include these countries. Hence Pliny and Ptolemy mention the Elymæi, as a people near the Persian gulf ; and on the other hand Daniel the prophet speaks of Shushan the capital of Susiana, as lying in the province of Elam.†

Arphaxad inhabited the vale of Shinar, on the river Tigris, toward the southern extremity of Mesopotamia, together with the country of Eden, and the tract on the east side of the same river, called Arrapachitis,—a name plainly derived from Arrapachshad, the name of Arphaxad in the Hebrew text. The truth of this assertion rests upon the following considerations :—1. After the flood, Noah probably returned to the pleasant and fruitful vales of the rapid Tigris, with whose richness and beauty he was well acquainted ; a supposition which is confirmed by the town of Zama, built in that country, probably by one of the sons of Shem, and named in honour of his father, who is uniformly called Zam by the Arabians. 2. The family of Shem took no part in the presumptuous undertaking at Babel, which issued in the dispersion of the settlers ; and, by consequence, being exempt from their punishment, continued

* Bochart. Phal. lib. ii. cap. 3, p. 72 ; Wells' Historical Geography, vol. i. p. 95.

† Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. vi. sec. 28 ; Bochart. Phal. lib. ii. cap. 2, p. 70 ; Wells' Geog. vol. i. p. 96 ; Dan. viii. 2.

to occupy their original habitations, and to converse in the language of their forefathers. 3. This opinion may be confirmed from these words of Moses :—‘ And their dwelling was from Mesha, as you go unto Sephar, a mount of the east.’* Mesha is probably the mountain Mash or Masius, in the western parts of Mesopotamia; and Sephar, the mountain adjoining to Siphare, a city in Aria, which lies directly east from Mesha. In this long tract of country, which, though large, certainly was not more extensive than his numerous family required, lived Arphaxad, with his renowned progenitors, Shem and Noah. 4. In the province of Susiana, if any credit is due to several ancient writers, stood the town of Sela, probably built by Sela, one of the sons of Arphaxad, and called, at least, by his name. Now, Susiana, it has been shown, contained a part of the country of Eden, which either lay contiguous to the vale of Shinar, or formed a part of the extensive region which sometimes went by that name. 5. That Arphaxad occupied the vale of Shinar, is farther confirmed by Terah and Abraham, his lineal descendants, emigrating from that country into Syria. The words of Moses are :—‘ And Terah took Abraham his son, and went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan.’ Now, it is perhaps universally admitted, that Chaldea comprehended a great part of the vale of Shinar; and it certainly did comprehend all that district of Eden on the west side of the channel, which receives the united streams of the Tigris and Euphrates. And Josephus affirms, perhaps on the authority of this passage of Scripture, that the Chaldeans were originally called Arphaxadeans, from the father of their nation.† These considerations, taken together, render it at least extremely probable, that the family of Arphaxad planted their original settlements in the vale of Shinar, including the land of Eden, without confining them, as some have supposed,

* Genesis x. 30.

† Antiq. lib. i. cap. 6, sec. 4.

to the province of Arrapachitis.* In this large and beautiful country, the virtuous children of Shem, one of whom had no fewer than thirteen sons, rapidly increased into a numerous and respectable people ; but they were soon subdued by the policy and arms of Nimrod, and absorbed in the vast and powerful empire which he founded at Babel.

Ham, the youngest son of Noah's family, unable to bear the presence of a father whom he had so greatly offended, and from whose reluctant lips he had drawn a curse upon himself and his posterity, mingled in the crowd of emigrants that took possession of the vale of Shinar, and engaged in their impious projects. Driven from Babel by the visitation of divine justice, he directed his steps into Syria, and after establishing his son Canaan in Palestine, proceeded with Mizraim into Egypt, where he spent the residue of his days. The journey of Ham into Egypt, and his final settlement there, is confirmed by the name which that country, more than once, receives in the sacred Scriptures. For no other reason could it with propriety be called the 'land of Ham,' but because he directed in person the settlements of Mizraim. Nor can it be reasonably doubted, that the person whom the Greeks elevated to the rank of a god, under the name of Jupiter Ammon, and in whose honour a splendid temple was built in the deserts of Lybia, so celebrated for its oracle, was the patriarch Ham.†

Canaan, the youngest of his sons mentioned by Moses, settled in the country which for many ages sustained his name, and which came at length, by the decree of Heaven, into the possession of the chosen seed, the descendants of Abraham. As a particular account of this country will be given in a subsequent part of this work, I proceed to the settlements of Cush.

* Bochart. Phal. lib. ii. c. 4, p. 74 ; Wells' Historical Geography, vol. i. p. 97.

† Bochart. lib. iv. c. 1, p. 203 ; Wells' Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 90.

The original stock of the Cushite nation owned extensive possessions both in Asia and Africa; and though they were separated from each other by the Arabian gulf and the deserts of Africa, yet they frequently submitted to the same princes.* It is universally admitted, however, that their first settlements were in Arabia, and that they did not enter Africa till some time after their establishment in that country.

That Arabia is denoted by Cush in the sacred Scriptures, is evident from several passages.† In the book of Numbers, we read that Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married. But we know from Exodus ii. 15, that Moses' wife was a Midianitish woman; and it is confessed that Midian or Madian was a city and country in Arabia, on the shore of the Red Sea. The wife of Moses was therefore an Arabian; and, by consequence, the Hebrew term Cushite is not rightly translated Ethiopian, unless it be understood of Ethiopia in Asia, that is, Arabia, not of Ethiopia in Africa. Another proof that the land of Cush was in Asia, may be drawn from these words of the prophet:—'I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction; the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble.'‡ In this passage, Cush and Midian are used as equivalent terms, denoting the same or parts of the same country. But African Ethiopia, so far from comprehending the land of Midian within its limits, does not even border upon it, but lies at a great distance in the interior. The following passage from Ezekiel affords a strong additional proof:—'I will make the land of Egypt desolate, from the tower of Syene even unto the border of Cush.'§ Here the pro-

* Michaelis Spicil. part i. p. 144.

† Bochart. Phaleg. lib. iv. c. 2, p. 209.

‡ Habak. iii. 7.

§ Ezekiel xxix. 10. [This passage is badly and erroneously translated in our version. For the Hebrew word *Magdol*, which is there rendered *tower*, is properly the name of the city Magdolum, which was situated at the hither end of Egypt, on the borders of Palestine;

phet evidently means, that the tower of Syene and the border of Cush are the two extremities of Egypt. But Syene is situated on the very margin of the frightful desert which separates Egypt from African Ethiopia ; therefore Cush, which is the opposite boundary, cannot be the country in Africa commonly known by the name of Ethiopia ; but must be understood of that part of Arabia which extends to the northern boundary of Egypt, which is at the greatest distance from Ethiopia. Again, the sacred historian informs us, that while Sennacherib, king of Assyria, was besieging Libnah in the tribe of Judah, Tirhakah, king of Cush, was marching against him with a numerous army.* In like manner, that Zera the Cushite came with a great army against Asa, king of Judah.† But neither of these passages can refer to African Ethiopia ; because the monarch of that country cannot march an army against the land of Canaan, without passing through the burning deserts of Senaar, and the whole length of Egypt ; an expedition which can be attended with nothing but ruin and disgrace. But to the king of the Cushite nation, it would be no difficulty to march an army against the land of Judah, a country which bordered on his dominions.

But the Cushites, not satisfied with their possessions in Arabia, passed over the Red Sea and settled in Ethiopia and the neighbouring countries. This important fact is attested by Josephus,‡ and, which is of much greater importance, seems to be plainly implied in several passages of Scripture. The prophet Isaiah speaks of the rivers of Cush,§ but he well knew that Arabia has no rivers, and by consequence he must

whereas, Syene stood at the opposite end, on the confines of Ethiopia. The translation, therefore, ought to be : from Migdol to Syene shall they fall by the sword, *i. e.* from the one end of Egypt to the other ; or, as we say, from Land's end to John o' Groats. The same translation ought to be adopted in chap. xxx. 6.]—*Editor.*

* 2 Kings xix. 9.

† 2 Chron. xiv. 9.

‡ Antiq. b. i. c. 6, sec. 2.

§ Isaiah xviii. 1 ; see also Zeph. iii. 10.

refer to some other part of the world. Another prophet hints that the Cushites were of a different colour from the rest of men :—‘ Can the Ethiopian or Cushite change his skin ?’* This cannot refer to the swarthy colour of the Jews and Arabs, for then he could not speak of that colour as peculiar to the Cushites, which belonged to both nations. Nor can we account, upon any other hypothesis, for the remarkable circumstance that when Shishak, king of Egypt, invaded Judah, a numerous body of Cushites marched under his banners,† for it cannot be reasonably supposed that he obtained these auxiliaries from Arabia.‡

The situation of Seba, the first son of Cush mentioned by Moses, is clearly indicated in the south-west part of Arabia by the city of Sabe. On the south-east side the city of Sabana may point out the settlement of Sheba, the grandson of Cush by Raama. That he dwelt in the neighbourhood of his father and brother, who fixed their abode in this part of the country, may be inferred as well from the influence of natural affection, as from the circumstance of his being always joined with them in the statements of the sacred writers. ‘ The merchants of Sheba and Raama,’ says Ezekiel, ‘ are thy merchants ;’ and in another passage, ‘ Sheba and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish,’ &c.§ These two families, Sheba and Seba, from the similarity of their names, were quickly confounded by the Greeks and Romans, and called promiscuously Sabæans ; but in the sacred writings they are accurately distinguished :—‘ The kings of Sheba and Seba,’ said the royal Psalmist, ‘ shall offer gifts.’||

* Jeremiah xiii. 23.

† 2 Chron. xii. 3.

‡ Michaelis Spicil. part i. p. 153.

§ Ezekiel xxvii. 22, and xxxviii. 13.

|| Psalm lxxii. 10; Bochart. Phaleg. p. 220; Wells' Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 102. [It has been much disputed among biblical scholars, whether Sheba and Seba were situated in Africa or Arabia. Those who hold the former opinion, suppose it to be the capital of the Ethiopians, called originally Saba, before Cambyeses, according to

On the same side of Arabia, the city called Rhegma (the term by which the Septuagint translates Raamah), on the shore of the Persian gulf, mentioned by Ptolemy, is supposed to point out the place of Raamah's habitation.* Michaelis places the city of Raamah in Arabia Felix; and says it was a place of great trade, whose inhabitants were very black. 'The merchants of Sheba and Raamah, they were thy merchants: They occupied thy fairs with chief of all spices, and with all precious stones and gold.'† And a little to the eastward on the same coast, another city called Dedan, the Daden of modern times, ascertains the settlement of Dedan, the son of Raamah and the brother of Sheba.‡

The situation of Dedan was admirably fitted for the trade to India, which, as may be inferred from the language of the prophet, his descendants prosecuted with spirit and success:—'The men of Dedan were thy merchants: many isles were the merchandise of thy hand: they brought thee for a present horns of ivory and ebony.' It is generally agreed that the horn mentioned in this text is the horn of the fish Monoceros, which is very like ivory, and which gave

Josephus, changed its name into Meroe, in honour of his sister. But besides that, the best historians assert, that Cambyzes built Meroe on a spot where no town had existed before, and named it after his mother, Bochart assigns the following reasons, to prove that it was situated, not in Africa, but in the southern extremity of Arabia Felix. *First*, Sheba was commonly called by the orientals, the *south country*, and hence our Lord spoke according to the common fashion, when he called the Queen of Sheba the Queen of the South. *Second*, The Queen of Sheba in Arabia Felix, might be most properly said to come from the utmost parts of the earth (land), for these Sabeans occupied the remotest parts of Southern Arabia; whereas, the Ethiopians in Meroe had several nations to the south of them in Africa. *Third*, Arabia Felix abounded much more in gold and spices than Ethiopia is said to do. See also Edinburgh Evangelical Magazine, 1803.]—*Editor*.

* Bochart. Phaleg. lib. iv. c. 7, p. 220, and c. 8, p. 231.

† Ezekiel xxvii. 22.

‡ Bochart. Phal. lib. iv. c. 5, p. 218, and c. 6, p. 219.

rise to the fable of the unicorn. The Monoceros is a native of the Indian seas.*

On the same line of coast to the northward, stood the city of Saphtha, which so nearly resembles Sabtah, the name of another son of Cush, that he may reasonably be supposed to have settled in this district. Still farther to the north, along the river Pison (as we have shown already), lay the possessions of his brother Havilah. This fact has been ascertained from the names which ancient writers give to the inhabitants of the country,—the Chautolæi, or Chablasii, or Chaulasii; all which are manifestly derived from Chavilah.

The possessions of Sabteca, another son of Cush, are omitted by the sacred writers, because these parts of Arabia lying next to the land of Canaan, are comprehended in the general allotment of Cush his father, who probably settled with him in this region.†

Dr Wells supposes that the descendants of Sabteca might be from him regularly enough styled at first by the Greeks Sabtacæni; which name might be afterwards softened into Saraceni: by which name, it is well known, the people of this tract were formerly denominated. And this, he thinks, is the more probable, because Stephanns mentions a country in those parts called Saruca. Bochart insists that the Saracens derive their name from Sarak, which in Arabic signifies to steal or rob; and that this name was given these people as being addicted to robbery. And perhaps, adds Dr Wells, this might be the reason of changing the original name Sabtaceni, into the nickname Saraceni. In whatever light the reader is disposed to view the conjectures of these learned writers, it must be admitted, that they perfectly correspond with the character and practices of the Saracens from the beginning of their history as a people.

The true situation of Mizraim, the second son of

* Michaelis Spicil. part i. p. 206.

† Bochart. Phal. lib. iv. c. 4, p. 217.

Ham, in the genealogy of Moses, is clearly determined in the Hebrew text ; where the term Mizraim is generally employed to denote the land of Egypt. His family consisted of seven sons ; the eldest of whom was Ludim, the father of the Ethiopians in Africa. That these Ethiopians are the Ludim, and their country the Lud of the sacred writers, is evident from the character which they give of that people : they are very skilful ' in drawing the bow ;'* an art in which, according to many writers of antiquity, the Ethiopians were eminently distinguished. Again, the prophet Isaiah, in the passage quoted in the margin, speaks of Phut and Lud as if they were two adjoining nations. But Phut may be considered as denoting the city and country of Philæ, not far from Syene on the borders of Ethiopia. It is also worthy of remark, that the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel join Lud or Ludim with Cush and Phut. But by Cush these inspired writers mean Arabia, together with the opposite coast of Africa ; and by Phut, as shall be shown immediately, the inhabitants of the country beyond Cyrene ; therefore, by Lud, may be meant the Ethiopians, who are the same with the Abyssinians, that lie nearly between the two former. The kingdom of Lydia, in the Lesser Asia, as it is rendered in our version, it cannot be ; for that country is at too great a distance from Cush and Phut, to admit of co-operation.†

The learned Bochart places the Anamim, in the country about the temple of Jupiter Ammon ; and in confirmation of his opinion, observes, that Herodotus expressly asserts the Ammonians to be descendants partly of the Egyptians, and partly of the Ethiopians. From these Anamim or Ammonii, the same writer thinks the Nazamones, with their neighbours, the

* Isaiah lxvi. 19 ; Jeremiah xlv. 9.

† Bocharti. Phaleg. lib. iv. c. 26, p. 263 ; Wells' Geography, vol. i. p. 104.

Amantes, the Garamantes, and the Hammanantes, mentioned by several ancients, are descended.*

The Lehabim, an adjoining nation, probably settled in the country of Libya Proper, or as it has been called Cyreniaca;† and the Naphtuhim, towards Egypt, in the neighbouring country of Marmarica. The situation of the latter, is partly confirmed by some remainder of the name, in a place called *Aptuchifanum*. This opinion receives some countenance from the heathen fables, in which Aptuchus or Aphtuchus, is said to be the son of Cyrene, from whom the city and country of Cyrene took its name.‡

The Pathruism, or descendants of Pathros, mentioned next by Moses, are the inhabitants of Upper Egypt or Thebais, where Ptolemy places Pathyris, an inland town, not far from Thebes. Of this opinion were the Seventy interpreters; for they render the Hebrew term Pathros, by the Greek Pathyris.§

The Casluhim probably settled in the country on the other side of Egypt, named Casiotis, where also mount Casius is placed; both retain somewhat of the name Casluhim. But the situation of this people is placed beyond a doubt by the remark of Moses, that from them sprang the Philistines, who, in process of time, seized on a narrow stripe of country in Palestine, stretching along the shores of the Mediterranean, and made a conspicuous figure in the subsequent history of that interesting part of the earth.||

The Caphtorim were situated near to the Casluhim: for they are placed next to each other in the sacred text; and the Philistines, who are said to be descended from the Casluhim,¶ are in another passage denoted

* Bochart. Phaleg. lib. iv. c. 30, p. 284.

† See Michaelis Spicil. part i. p. 262; Wells' Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 106.

‡ Bochart. Phaleg. lib. iv. c. 28, p. 279.

§ Ibid. c. 27, p. 274; Michaelis Spicil. part i. p. 271; Wells' Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 106.

|| Wells' Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 107.

¶ Genesis x. 14.

by the name of Caphtorim.* Hence it may be inferred that these two nations were near neighbours; and, united in the closest bonds of peace and amity, were at last blended into one people.†

The name of Caphtor seems to be preserved in an old city of Egypt called Coptus. From this name the Christians in Egypt are still called Cophtes or Copts, and the whole country Egyptus, for Ægophtus, or the land of Coptus.

The inheritance of Phut, the only remaining son of Ham, is placed, with great probability, in the region adjoining to the western border of Cyrene. For, in Africa, properly so called, below Adrumetum, was a city named Putea, mentioned by Pliny; and in Mauritania, into the western parts of which the possessions of Phut extended to some length, is a river mentioned by Ptolemy, called Phut. Jerome asserts that the river still retained the name in his time, and extended it to the whole country round, which from it was called the country of Phut.‡ These are the plantations of the sons of Noah; and in this manner was the earth divided among the renovated nations, after their expulsion from the vale of Shinar.

* Deuteronomy ii. 23; see also Jeremiah xlvii. 4.

† Wells' Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 107.

‡ Michaelis Spicil. part i. p. 166; Bochart. Phal. lib. iv. cap. 33, p. 294.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE CONQUESTS AND KINGDOM OF NIMROD.

DURING the first century after the deluge the sons of Noah settled where they pleased, and enjoyed in common the fruits of the undivided soil. This was the golden age of the poets, when the stone was not placed in the furrow, to mark the limits of the cultivated field.

‘ Non fixus et agris,
Qui regerit certis finibus arva, lapis.’

IWA. b. i. EL. 3.

Virgil says, it was then unlawful to appropriate the surface of the ground.* But in the days of Peleg, the silver age commenced, when the fields were divided, and became the private property of individuals, who began to cultivate the soil for their own benefit, and to accumulate wealth for their own families.

‘ Tum primum subiere domos,’ &c.

Then the Noachidæ began to construct houses for their private accommodation, and to build the city and the tower of Babel, which excited the righteous anger of Heaven, and procured their dispersion over the face of all the earth. The iron age began with the birth of Nimrod, one of the most remarkable characters

* Nec signare quidem aut partiri limite campum
Pas erat.

Geor. i, l. 126.

in the history of our species. He was the youngest son of Cush, and the grandson of Ham; equally distinguished, according to ancient writers, by the gigantic size and strength of his bodily frame, the vigour and extent of his mental powers, and his daring and insatiable ambition. In the presumptuous undertaking at Babel, he seems to have had no participation, and the probability is that the foundations of that amazing structure were laid before he was born. The manner in which the sacred historian introduces him to the notice of his readers, seems to indicate, that though the youngest of the family, he was by far the most remarkable of the sons of Cush. The words of Moses are, 'and Cush begat Nimrod;' as if he alone were deserving of our attention; and this conjecture is greatly strengthened by the next clause, which presents him in the commencement of his career:—'He was a mighty hunter before the Lord.' Cherishing, it is probable, from his earliest years, the lust of power and the hope of sovereignty, he advanced towards the grand object of his ambition, with cautious and deliberate steps. He began the execution of his plans, by endeavouring to ingratiate himself with his future subjects. The terrors of the Cushite nation had been excited, and their safety endangered, by numerous beasts of prey from the surrounding deserts; his first attempt was to extirpate or drive back into the wilderness, those savage disturbers of the peaceful inhabitants. This was deemed in those times a public benefit of the first importance.*

To accomplish this beneficial and necessary purpose,

* So late as the days of Homer, to deliver the people from the dread and ravages of wild beasts, was reckoned an achievement worthy of the most powerful monarchs, and ranked among the highest honours to which they could aspire.

Καρτιστοι μὲν ἔσαν, καὶ καρτιστοῖς ἐμαχόντο
Φερσὶν ὀρεσκώοισι καὶ ἐκπαλῶς ἀπολέσσαν.

Iliad, b. 1, l. 266.

and to promote, at the same time, his secret designs on the liberty of his nation, he formed a band of resolute young men, at whose head he combated the wild beasts of the forest ; and thus, by enuring his followers to the toils and dangers of the chase, he gradually formed them to the use of arms, reduced them to a state of rude discipline and imperfect submission—‘ that at a proper time, after they had been accustomed to his orders, and seasoned in arms, he might make use of them for other purposes more serious than hunting.’

This artifice of Nimrod, Diodorus mentions, but by mistake ascribes it to Ninus his son. ‘ Ninus, the most ancient of the Assyrian kings mentioned in history, performed great actions. Being naturally of a warlike disposition, and ambitious of glory that results from valour, he armed a considerable number of young men, that were brave and vigorous like himself ; trained them up a long time in laborious exercises and hardships, and by that means accustomed them to bear the fatigues of war patiently, and to face dangers with courage and intrepidity.’* By this means, Nimrod became ‘ *a mighty hunter before the Lord ;*’ renowned above all his associates for skill, intrepidity, and success in clearing his native land of the beasts of prey by which it was annoyed.

Flushed with success, and conscious of his own power, he threw off the mask, refusing any longer to acknowledge the authority of his great grandfather Noah, and with a resolute hand seized the reins of government. That he was guilty of rebellion on this occasion, is intimated by his name, derived from a Hebrew verb which signifies to rebel ; but whether it was prophetic or given him after the event, is not known. Having reduced the Cushite nation to his obedience, he passed the Tigris,* and resolved to occupy Shinar. He consolidated and extended his power, by entering into an alliance, if we may credit an ancient

* Hist. vol. i. p. 113.

tradition, with the king of the Arabs, with whom he united his forces. This was probably one of his brothers, all of whom, Rollin supposes, settled in Arabia, and lived near enough their brother to lend him succours, or to receive his assistance. Thus Nimrod, the rebellious descendant of the venerable Noah, in the language of Moses, *began to be mighty upon the earth*; that is, he formed settlements, subdued his neighbours, united different nations under his authority, and erected them into a state of considerable extent; which, in succeeding ages, by new acquisitions, expanded into one of the most extensive and powerful empires that ever existed.*

Allured, it is probable, by the fruitfulness and beauty of the vale of Shinar, and especially by the numerous and important advantages presented to his penetrating and sagacious mind by the situation of Babel, which, from the confusion of tongues, had, it is generally believed, been resigned to desolation and silence, he took possession of the deserted city, and made it the capital of his empire. 'The beginning of his kingdom,' says the sacred writer, 'was Babel.' He was the first that ventured to people it after the dispersion; the first to finish the city and enclose it with walls: but daring as he certainly was, he did not presume to expose himself, and his new subjects, to the wrath of heaven, by ordering the tower to be finished. The city of Babylon, the foundations of which were laid by the builders of the tower, and probably consisted of a few houses for the accommodation of the workmen, or, perhaps, by Nimrod himself in the vicinity of Babel, was greatly beautified and enlarged by Semiramis, the wife of Ninus, the son and successor of Nimrod. But it rose to the zenith of its glory in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, who proudly claimed it as his own creation:

* Bochart. Phaleg. lib. iv. c. 12, p. 226; Michaelis Spicil. p. 213-215; Rollin's Ancient History, vol. ii. p. 178; Wells' Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 115.

—‘Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?’*

This magnificent city, the capital or beginning of Nimrod’s kingdom, stood on a large plain, in a deep and rich soil, of a quadrangular form, and divided almost into two equal parts by the river Euphrates. The walls were built of brick, cemented with bitumen, with which the soil seems to have been saturated; their height was fifty cubits, and the breadth so great, that chariots, drawn by four horses, might pass one another on the top of them without danger. These prodigious walls embraced a circuit of sixty miles; and are said to have been finished in one year by the hands of two hundred thousand workmen. They were strengthened with two hundred and fifty towers, ten feet higher than the walls. Twenty-five gates of solid brass on every side of the great square, terminated an equal number of streets, which ran in straight lines from one side of the city to the other; so that the whole number of the streets were fifty, each fifteen miles long, of which twenty-five went one way, and twenty-five the other, directly crossing each other at right angles.† [Besides these there were four streets, built only on one side, 200 feet in breadth, surrounding the whole, and fronting towards the outer wall. It was thus intersected into 676 squares, which extended four furlongs and a half on each of their sides, and along which the houses were built of three or four stories in height, and at some distance from each other. These intermediate spaces, as well as the inner parts of the squares, were employed as gardens and pleasure grounds by the inhabitants.] On each side of the river was a quay, and a high wall built of brick and bitumen, of the same thickness as the walls that went round the

* Daniel iv. 30; Bochart. Phaleg. lib. iv. c. 13, p. 230.

† Rollin’s Ancient History, vol. ii. p. 185; Prideaux’s Connections, vol. i. p. 95, *et seq.*; Wells’ Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 116.

city. In these walls, over against every street that led to the river, were gates of brass, and from them descents, by steps, to the river, for the conveniency of the inhabitants who were obliged to pass the river in boats, before the building of the bridge. These brazen gates were always open in the day time, and shut in the night.*

A beautiful and magnificent bridge of stone was, in process of time, constructed across the river, and led from one part of the city to another, a furlong in length, and thirty feet in breadth, adorned at each end with a splendid palace [between which a communication was established by a subterranean tunnel under the bed of the river. The old palace on the east side was thirty furlongs in circumference, while the new palace on the west covered ground to the extraordinary compass of eight miles. Parts of the palace which stood are perhaps traceable in a heap of ruins, which goes by the name of Al Kasr, the palace.] But the most wonderful effort perhaps of imperial wealth and power, was the lake which the monarchs of Babylon caused to be dug near Sippara, to the west of the city, to secure it from the dreadful effects of the periodical inundations. This immense artificial bason was forty miles square, one hundred and sixty in compass, and thirty-five deep, according to Herodotus,† and seventy-five according to Megasthenes. Into this lake was the whole river turned by a canal cut from the west side of it, till they had finished some artificial channels at a very considerable distance above the town, to receive the inundations of the river, occasioned by the periodical melting of the snow on the mountains of Armenia,

* These brazen gates are referred to by the prophet Isaiah, when he is describing the Lord as saying to Cyrus the conqueror of Babylon :—' I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight. I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron.'—Isaiah xlv. 2.—*Editor*.

† Lib. i. cap. 179, 180.

which turned the course of these waters into the Tigris, before they reached Babylon.*

On the west side of the river, within the city, near the new palace, rose, in majestic grandeur, the celebrated pensile gardens, consisting of four terraces, forming a perfect square, terrace above terrace, raised on a wall twenty-two feet thick, sustained by vast arches raised upon other arches, each ten feet wide, till they equalled in height the walls of the city. These terraces were crowned with trees of the largest size, vigorously flourishing on the deep mould with which the arches were covered, and beautified with every plant and flower that was proper for a garden of pleasure.†

* The chief of these were the Nahr-Malca, or King's River, leading from the Euphrates to the Tigris; and the Pallacopas and the Maarsares, both branches or outlets of the same river. These are alluded to in Psalm cxxxvii. 1.—*Editor*.

† 'This hanging garden,' says Diodorus, 'was built by Cyrus for the sake of a favourite of his harem, who being a Persian (as is said) by birth, and coveting meadows on mountain tops, desired the king, by an artificial plantation, to imitate the lands of her native country. The ascent up to this garden was as to the top of a mountain, and it had buildings and apartments out of one into another, like unto a theatre; under the steps to the ascent were built arches, one above another, rising gently by degrees, which supported the whole plantation. The highest arch, upon which the platform of the garden was laid, was fifty cubits high, and the garden itself was surrounded with battlements and bulwarks. The walls were made very strong, built at no small charge and expense, being two and twenty feet thick, and every sally-port ten feet wide; over the several stories of this fabric were laid beams and summers of huge massy stones, each sixteen feet long and four broad. The roof over all these was first covered with reeds, daubed with abundance of brimstone; then upon these were laid double tiles, fastened together with a hard and durable mortar; and over these, after all, was a covering with sheets of lead, that the wet, which drenched through the earth, might not rot the foundation. Upon all these was laid earth of a convenient depth, sufficient for the growth of the largest trees. When the soil was laid even and smooth it was planted with all sorts of trees, which, both for greatness and beauty, might delight the spectators. The arches (which stood one above another, and by that means darted light sufficient one into another) had in them many stately rooms of all kinds, and for all purposes. But there was one that had in it certain engines, whereby it drew

Near the old palace, on the opposite side of the river, stood the temple of Belus; in the middle of which was a prodigious tower, of a quadrangular form, half a mile in circuit, and a furlong in height. This astonishing structure is supposed, by many writers, to have been the celebrated tower of Babel, the building of which was interrupted by the confusion of tongues. The riches of this temple, in statues, tables, censers, cups, and other sacred vessels, all of massy gold, were immense. Among other images was one of forty feet high, which weighed a thousand Babylonish talents.* According to the calculation of Diodorus, this temple contained six thousand three hundred and fifty Attic talents of gold, which amounts to more than twenty-one millions sterling.†

Such was ancient Babylon, over the splendour, and magnificence, and extent of which, the heart of Nebuchadnezzar exulted, while he looked down upon it from the highest terrace of his pensile gardens, and his lips exclaimed:—‘Is not this great Babylon which I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?’ Exactly according with the truth of ancient history, are the accounts which the prophets of the Lord have left us of the greatness and strength of that haughty mistress of the nations, and oppressor of the whole earth. Isaiah pronounces her ‘the glory of kingdoms; the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency; the golden city;

plenty of water out of the river, through certain conduits and conveyances from the platform of the garden, and nobody was the wiser, or knew what was done.’—*Diodorus Siculus*, vol. i. p. 106, *Booth’s Translation*.—*Editor*.

* This was probably the colossal image erected by Nebuchadnezzar, which is said in Daniel to have been sixty cubits or ninety feet high. But this must have included pedestal and image altogether. Its value is estimated at three and a half millions sterling.—*Editor*.

† Hist. vol. i. p. 120–123; Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 503; Rollin’s Ancient History, vol. ii. p. 192; Wells’ Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 117.

the lady of kingdoms.* Jeremiah speaks of her 'broad walls,' and her 'brazen gates;' and calls her, by a most significant figure, 'the hammer of the whole earth;' and a 'destroying mountain which destroyed all the earth:' and says, 'she was abundant in treasures, and dwelling on many waters;' and in another passage he describes her as 'Jehovah's battle-axe and weapons of war, with which he brake in pieces the nations, and destroyed kingdoms.'†

This great and powerful city was so strong, both by nature and art, its inhabitants were so numerous and warlike, and its resources so many and various, that it was considered as impregnable. It seemed, says Orosius, to be almost equally incredible, that it could be built by the hands, or destroyed by the prowess of mortals.‡ The Babylonians themselves were of the same opinion; they boasted that Babylon should remain the mistress of nations till the end of all things. 'Thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever, so that thou didst not lay these things to thy heart, neither didst remember the latter end of it.—Thou saidst in thine heart, I am, and none else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children.'§ But the event proved that the prophets had not foretold the destruction of that splendid and powerful city in vain. The dreadful calamities which Babylon had brought upon so many cities and nations, to gratify her inordinate ambition, burst at last upon her own head, and overwhelmed her in complete and irretrievable ruin. The fearful threatenings of the prophet were literally fulfilled;—'Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah: it shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation; neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds

* Isaiah xiv. 4, and xlvii. 5, 7.

† Pp. 102, 103.

G.

‡ Jer. l. 23, and li. 20.

§ Isaiah xlvii. 7, 8.

make their fold there : but wild beasts of the desert shall lie there ; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures ; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there ; and the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces : and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged.* [It was invested in the year 540 B. C. by the armies of Cyrus, who, having by an ingenious stratagem, diverted the channel of the river, poured his valiant troops into the city, and as the whole inhabitants, with their king Belshazzar, were securely indulging in the celebration of an annual festival, it fell an easy prey to the arms of the Persian conqueror. Cyrus, afterwards fixing his head quarters at Susa, Babylon ceased to be the capital of an empire, and its glory began rapidly to decline.] The Persians, says Strabo, destroyed a part of the city ; time, and the carelessness of the Macedonians, destroyed another part ; but the principal cause of its decline was, the building of Seleucia, about forty miles above Babylon, by Seleucus Nicator, who is said to have erected this new city from dislike to the Babylonians, and to have drawn five hundred thousand persons from Babylon, for the peopling of his new city.†

This rival city of empire, by degrees robbed Babylon of its glory and greatness, and even of its very name ; for it is expressly called Babylon in some ancient authors. In the time of Curtius, it had declined a fourth part ; it was reduced to desolation in the days of Pliny ; and when Jerome flourished it was turned into a park, in which the kings of Persia were accustomed to take the diversion of hunting.‡

* Isaiah xlii. 19, &c.

† Strabo, lib. xvi. p. 509. [Seleucus Nicator was one of the successors of Alexander the Great. He founded and built Seleucia in the year 293 B. C. The ruins of the ancient city bear sufficient testimony to its magnificence and extent.]—*Editor*.

‡ Rollin's Ancient Hist. vol. ii. p. 320; Wells' Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 118; Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. vi. sec. 30.

In the middle of the sixteenth century, the ruins of ancient Babylon were visited by Rauwolf, a German physician,* who gives the following mournful but instructive description of it. By a small village on the Euphrates, called Eulego, or Felugo, is the seat of the old Babylon, a day and a half's journey from Bagdat. The lands about it are so dry and desolate, that one may justly doubt the fertility of it, and the greatness of this city, if the vast ruins still to be seen did not banish all suspicion. There are still standing some arches of a bridge over the river, which is here half a mile broad, and exceeding deep: these arches are built of brick, and wonderfully compacted. A quarter of a mile beneath the village, in a plain, are the fallen ruins of a castle, and beyond that the ruins of the tower of Babel, half a German mile in compass, which is now a receptacle of serpents and venomous creatures. A little above the fall of the Tigris into the Euphrates, is a city now called Trax, formerly called Apamea. All that travel over these plains, will find vast numbers of the ruins of very ancient, great, and lofty buildings, arched towers, and other similar structures of wonderful architecture. There is only one tower, which is called Daniel's, still entire and inhabited, from whence may be seen all the ruins of this once vast city; which sufficiently demonstrate the truth of what ancient writers have said of its greatness, by the vastness of their extent.†

A noble Roman, Peter Della Valle, in the year 1616, visited what are thought to be the ruins of ancient Babylon. In the middle of a vast and level plain, about a quarter of a league from the Euphrates, he found a heap of ruined buildings, like a huge mountain, the materials of which are so confounded together, that he knew not what to make of it. Its situation

* Travels, Ray's edition, part ii. chap. 7.

† Rauwolf was altogether mistaken in his idea of the site of Babylon.—*Editor.*

and form corresponded with that pyramid which Strabo calls the tower of Belus, and is, in all probability, the tower of Nimrod in Babylon, or Babel, as the place is still called.* No marks of ruins appeared

* The temple of Bel (which word in Chaldee signifies 'Lord,' and being probably a title of honour assumed by the first ruler of Shinar, might have been the royal distinction of Nimrod), was long thought beyond dispute to have been situated on the eastern bank of the Euphrates, but it is now ascertained that this building must have stood on the western. Among the groups of hillocks that mark the supposed site of Babylon, there is a high mound, called Birs Nimroud, or the Hill of Nimrod, which is thought to have been the temple of Belus, although, from being covered with the debris of successive ages, it occupies a much larger space than the quadrangular area of that ancient edifice did. It is surmounted by a colossal pile of bricks, which, according to the immemorial tradition of the people of the country, is the ruin of the Tower of Babel. Three only of the eight successive towers remain; but in form, materials, and dimensions, it corresponds so exactly to the descriptions given of that primeval building, as sufficiently attests, in the opinion of Niebuhr, Rich, and Sir R. K. Porter, the truth of the popular tradition. 'On the western side,' says Porter, 'the entire mass rises at once from the plain in one stupendous, though irregular, pyramidal hill, broken in the slopes of its sweeping acclivities by the devastations of time, and rougher destruction. The southern and northern fronts are particularly abrupt.' 'On the summit of the hill,' says Rich, 'are immense fragments of brick-work, of no determinate figures, tumbled together, and converted into solid vitrified masses. Some of these huge fragments measured twelve feet in height, by twenty-four in circumference, and from the circumstance of the standing brick-work having remained in a perfect state, the change exhibited in these is only accountable from their having been exposed to the fiercest fire, or rather scathed by lightning. The appearance of the mountain and the tower thus remarkably verifies the predictions of Scripture.' 'In many of these immense unshapen masses,' says Porter, 'might be traced the gradual effects of the consuming power, which had produced so remarkable an appearance; exhibiting parts burnt to that variegated dark hue seen in the vitrified matter lying about in glass manufactories; while through the whole of these awful testimonies of the fire that hurled them from their original elevation, the regular lines of the cement are visible, and so hard in common with the bricks, that when the masses are struck they ring like glass. On examining the base of the standing wall contiguous to these huge transmuted substances, it is found tolerably free from any similar changes; in short, quite in its original state: hence, I draw the conclusion, that the consuming power acted from above, and that the scattered ruin fell from some higher point than the summit of the present standing frag-

without that huge mass, to convince him that so great a city as Babylon had ever stood there; all he could discover within fifty or sixty yards of it being only the remains, here and there, of some foundations of buildings; and the country round so flat and level, that it is difficult to believe it should be chosen for the situation of so great and noble a city as Babylon, or that it ever contained any remarkable buildings. Della Valle, however, was astonished to find so many remains of that renowned city, after the lapse of four thousand years since it was built, and Diodorus Siculus tells us it was reduced almost to nothing in his time.*

Tavernier, a very celebrated traveller, discovered, at the parting of the Tigris, a little way from Bagdat, the foundations of a city which seemed to be a large league in compass. Some of the walls were yet standing, upon which six coaches might go abreast; they were made of burnt brick, ten feet square, and three feet thick. The chronicles of the country say, they are the remains of ancient Babylon; but Tavernier imagined they were the ruins of Nebuchadnezzar's palace, or of the tower of Babel. He adopts the opinion of the Arabs, and conceives them to be rather the remains of some tower built by one of their princes for a beacon to assemble his subjects in time of war; and this conjecture, in all probability, approaches nearest to the truth.†

It is not one of the least remarkable circumstances

ment. The heat of the fire that produced such amazing effects must have burned with the force of the strongest furnace; and, from the general appearance of the cleft in the wall, and these vitrified masses, I should be induced to attribute the catastrophe to lightning from heaven.' How literally is the Scripture verified, 'Bel boweth down; Bel is confounded. I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain;' Isaiah xlv. 1.; Jer. l. 21; i. 25. Sir R. K. Porter's Trav. vol. ii. p. 310; Rich's Mem. p. 36; Mignan's Trav. p. 207; Keith's Evidence of Prophecy, p. 345.—*Editor*.

* Travels, part ii. Epist. 17.

† Tavernier in Harris Coll. vol. ii. book 2, chap. 5.

related of Babylon, that we cannot learn, either from ancient writers, or modern travellers, where this renowned city stood: only in general, that it was situated in the province of Chaldea, upon the river Euphrates, considerably above its confluence with the Tigris. 'Travellers have guessed, from the great ruins they have discovered in several parts of this country, that in this or that place Babylon once stood; but when we come to examine nicely the places they mention, we only learn that they were certainly in the wrong, and have mistaken the ruins of Seleucia, or some other great town.* Mr Hanway declares, that the ruins of Babylon are now so much effaced, that hardly any vestiges of them remain to point out the situation.'†

By these accounts we see (to use the words of Newton) how punctually time hath fulfilled the predictions of the prophets concerning Babylon. When it was converted into a chase for wild beasts to feed and breed there, then were exactly accomplished the words of the prophets, that 'the wild beasts of the desert, with the wild beasts of the islands, should dwell there, and cry in their desolate houses.' One part of the country was overflowed by the rivers having been turned out of its course, and never restored again to its former channel, and thence became boggy and marshy, so that it might literally be said to be 'a possession for the bittern, and pools of water.' Another part is described as dry and naked, and barren of every thing, so that thereby was also fulfilled another prophecy, which seemed, in some measure, to contradict the former. 'Her cities are a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness, a land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby. The place thereabout is represented as overrun with serpents, scorpions, and all sorts of venomous and unclean creatures; so that 'their houses are full of

* Salmon's Mod. Hist. vol. i. chap. 11.

† Hanway's Trav. vol. iv. part 3, chap. 10, p. 78.

doleful creatures, and dragons cry in their pleasant palaces ; and Babylon is become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment and an hissing, without an inhabitant.' For all these reasons, 'neither can the Arabian pitch his tent there, neither can the shepherds make their folds there.' And when we find that modern travellers cannot now certainly discover the spot of ground whereon that imperial city once was situated, we may very properly say, How is Babylon become a desolation among the nations? Every purpose of the Lord hath he performed against Babylon, to make the land of Babylon a desolation without an inhabitant ; and the expression is no less true than sublime, that 'the Lord of hosts has swept it with the besom of destruction.'*

The second city built by Nimrod in the land of Shinar, was Erech, which, under the name of Aracca, Ptolemy places on the lowest bend of the common channel of the Tigris and Euphrates. The Archevites mentioned by Ezra, are thought to be some of its inhabitants that were removed to Samaria.†

The true situation of Accad, the third city in the kingdom of Nimrod, cannot now be determined with any degree of certainty. Accad is written by the Seventy interpreters, Archad ; some faint traces of which are supposed to be preserved in the name of the river Argades ; which, according to Ctesius, runs near Settace, a town at some distance from the Tigris, in the country of Sittacene, between Babylon and Susa.‡

The last of the cities belonging to the kingdom of Nimrod, and lying in the land of Shinar, mentioned by

* Newton's Dissert. vol. i. p. 178; Rollin's Ancient Hist. vol. ii. p. 321. [The *literal* accomplishment of the predicted doom of Babylon, in all the circumstances mentioned by the prophets, is illustrated at great length, and in a most interesting manner, in Dr Keith's Evidence of Prophecy.]—*Editor*.

† Ezra iv. 9 ; Bochart. Phal. lib. iv. c. 16, p. 235.

‡ Bochart. Phal. lib. iv. c. 17, p. 237 ; Michaelis Spicil. part i. p. 226.

the sacred writer, is Calne. In the prophecies of Isaiah, it is written with little variation, Calno; and in Ezekiel, Canneh. The prophets Isaiah and Amos both represent it as a place of considerable importance in their times. It is said by the Chaldee interpreters, and also by Eusebius and Jerome, to be the same with Ctesiphon, a city on the Tigris, about three miles distant from Seleucia, and for some time the capital of the Parthian dominions. This opinion seems to be fully confirmed by the name Chalonitis, which the Greeks gave to the surrounding country; which is evidently formed from Chalne or Chalno, or by a mixture of both, from Chalone. And since we are expressly told by Ammianus Marcellinus, that Pacorus, a king of the Parthians, changed its name to Ctesiphon, we reasonably suppose, from the name of the adjacent country, Chalonitis, that its ancient name was Chalne or Chalone.*

These four cities, all situated in the land of Shinar, with their respective territories, seem to have constituted the original kingdom of Nimrod. The words of Moses certainly countenance this idea:—‘And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calne.’ Babel was the first city which he built, and the seat of his government; but the other three cities belonged not less than Babel to the beginning of his kingdom.

By the irruption of Nimrod, at the head of the

* Michaelis Spicil. part i. p. 238; Wells’ Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 119; Bochart. Phal. lib. iv. c. 18, p. 238. [In the time of the prophets, Amos and Isaiah, who were nearly contemporary (about eighteen hundred years before the Christian era), Calneh appears to have constituted an independent principality (Amos vi. 1, 2). But not long after Calneh became a prey to the Assyrians with the rest of western Asia, for in Isa. x. 9, the king of Assyria is introduced as saying: Are not my princes altogether kings? Is not Calno as Carchemish? &c. About a hundred and fifty years later, Calneh was still a considerable town, as may be inferred from the circumstance of its being mentioned by Ezekiel xxvii. 23, among the places which traded with Tyre.—*Rosenmüller, Bib. Cab.*—*Editor.*

Cushites, into the lower parts of Shinar, Ashur, one of the descendants of Shem,* who seem to have held it, if not by the allotment of Noah, their common superior, at least by pre-occupancy, was obliged to retire, and seek new settlements for himself and his people. He ascended the Tigris, and took possession of the country which was afterwards known by his name. The words of Moses are :—‘ Out of this land went Ashur, and builded Nineveh.’† Bochart contends for a different version. ‘ I am persuaded,’ says that excellent writer, ‘ that the term Ashur is not, in this place, the name of a man, but of a country. The words therefore in the original are to be thus interpreted, ‘ He (Nimrod) went out of this land into Assyria.’ In this opinion he has been followed by Dr Wells and others, who have been too easily prejudiced against the common version. He endeavours to support his opinion by the following arguments :—1. It would be improper to introduce the name of Ashur, the son of Shem, in the genealogy of the sons of Ham. 2. It is contrary to order, to state the operations of Ashur, before he mentioned his birth. 3. It was not peculiar to Ashur, and therefore not remarkable that he should go out of the land of Shinar in quest of new settlements, since the far greatest part of mankind did the same. 4. The words being taken in reference to Nimrod, the connexion between the 10th and 11th verses is preserved. The beginning of this kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calne, in the land of Shinar ; but afterwards he extended his dominions by invading and reducing Assyria to his yoke, and built Nineveh and three other cities, to secure his conquests.‡

These arguments are of little importance, and by no means warrant the proposed alteration. It is a sufficient answer, that the history of Ashur is not given here, but the history of Nimrod. He invaded the pos-

* Michaelis Spicil. p. 236.

† Genesis x. 11.

‡ Bochart. Phal. lib. iv. cap. 19, p. 240.

sessions of Ashur, and forced him to relinquish his original property;* and the accounts of each are so connected, that one must be mentioned with the other, to complete the history. No writer, sacred or common, always follows the precise order of events. In the same book, Moses gives us an account of Canaan, the son of Ham, antecedent to the genealogy of his family, which follows in the next chapter.† Nor was the emigration from Shinar common to all mankind; for only a small part of them were concerned in the compulsory dispersion: besides, Bochart omits a principal and important part of the passage. The sacred writer does not say merely, that Ashur went forth out of the land, but that he went forth and built cities; a circumstance by no means common to all. These cities rose, in the progress of time, to great renown; it was therefore of consequence to mention their founder, and the reason why they were built. The connexion between the 10th and 11th verses is equally clear by the common version:—Nimrod, at the head of his army, seized on the province of Babylonia, and erected it into a kingdom; and Ashur, the original possessor, disdaining to wear his ignominious yoke, retired into Assyria; and to secure his recent acquisitions from the aggression of his ambitious enemy, builded Nineveh and other cities mentioned in the sacred text.‡

Bochart adds, that Nimrod must have been in possession of Assyria; for it was called the land of Nimrod. His argument is founded on a passage in Micah, which

* Rollin's Ancient Hist. vol. ii. p. 181.

† Gen. ix. 18.

‡ Notwithstanding the elaborate reasoning of the author, there is reason to believe that the weight of authorities inclines towards the other translation, according to which it was Nimrod who went forth out of Babylonia into Assyria, and built Nineveh. 'The native accounts,' says Rosenmuller, 'preserved to us by Ctesias, designated the builder of Nineveh and the founder of the Assyrian empire, by the name of Ninus, and there is no reason for supposing this a different person from the Nimrod of Scripture.'—*Bib. Cab.* vol. ii. p. 131.—*Editor.*

runs in these words :—‘ And they shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod in the entrances thereof.’* He supposes that the land of Assyria and the land of Nimrod mentioned by the prophet, are the same region. But this is to charge the inspired writer with a very unnecessary repetition; and with a redundancy not common in the sacred writings. By the land of Ashur is plainly meant the region of Assyria; but by the land of Nimrod is signified the country of Babylonia, which was the true and only land of Nimrod. In order to understand the purport of the prophecy, we should consider the time when it was uttered. Micah is foretelling the ruin of the Assyrian empire, of which Babylonia had been made a part by conquest. But the Babylonians were at this time endeavouring to throw off the yoke of Nineveh, and establish an independent government. As, however, they made a part of the Assyrian empire, they were to share in its calamities. To these events the prophecy alludes; in which two nations and two different regions are described. We may therefore be assured, that the land of Assyria and the land of Nimrod were two distinct countries.†

Ashur, probably imitating the policy of his dangerous competitor, built four cities for the accommodation and defence of his descendants; the first of which was

* Micah v. 6.

† Bryant's Anal. vol. iii. p. 68. [Dr Paxton does not display his usual critical acumen here. The extract which he has given from Bryant proves the reverse of his statement, and shows that Babylonia, having by conquest been made a part of the Assyrian empire, might properly be included in the general name of Assyria. Besides, in the passage from Micah, we have only to render *and* by *even*, a very common translation of the Hebrew particle, and instead of there appearing a redundancy not common in the Sacred Writings, there will be preserved that parallelism which is a well-known characteristic of the Hebrew poetry, and according to which the succeeding clause of a sentence is merely an echo of the former.

They shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword, *even* the land of Nimrod in the entrances thereof,’ i. e. the borders where its garrisons and chief strength lie.—*Editor*.

Nineveh, the capital of his¹ kingdom. This powerful city stood on the east side of the Tigris, not far from the river Lycus, one of its tributary streams; but on which side of the Lycus it lay, cannot now be discovered.* The prediction of Nahum, that Nineveh should be so completely destroyed, that future ages should search in vain for the spot which it once covered, has been fulfilled in all its extent:—‘With an overflowing flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof.’† Ancient geographers inform us of another city of this name, which stood on the Euphrates, and was probably built by Nimrod in honour of his son.‡ But Nineveh, so frequently mentioned in Scripture, lay near the Tigris; and to this last the following observations refer. Strabo affirms, that Nineveh was larger than Babylon itself; an assertion confirmed by Diodorus, who makes that city sixty miles in compass, while Strabo makes Babylon only about forty-eight.§ It is therefore with justice that the inspired writer calls Nineveh ‘an exceeding great city of three days’ journey.’ This account some interpreters refer not to the length, but to the compass of the city; allowing twenty miles for a day’s journey, which accords with the common estimation of those times. But the phrase, ‘Jonas began to enter into the city a day’s journey,’ seems rather to intimate, that the measure of three days’ journey is to be understood of the length, not of the compass, of Nineveh. Hence it may be easily supposed, that, agreeably to the statement of the prophet, it contained ‘more than sixscore thousand persons that could not discern between their right hand and their

* Bochart. Phal. lib. iv. cap. 20, p. 247. [It stood nearly opposite the modern town of Mosul.]—*Editor*.

† Nahum i. 8.

‡ The Nineveh mentioned here was built long after the one on the Tigris. When the Medes had destroyed the Nineveh of Nimrod, another city, at no great distance, arose out of the ruins of the former, and received the same name.—*Editor*.

§ Strabo, lib. xvi. pp. 502, 503; Diodorus Hist. vol. i. lib. 2, p. 115.

left hand ;'* for, supposing this to be understood of infants under two years old, these generally, as Bochart observes, make at least the fifth part of a city. If this proportion be just, the inhabitants of Nineveh would not be more than six hundred thousand ; which is not more than Seleucia contained in the days of Pliny, and not so many as has been numbered in the capital of the British empire.†

Nineveh was not more celebrated for her extent, and the number of her inhabitants, than for the strength of her fortifications. The walls were an hundred feet high, and so broad that three carts might go abreast on the top. They were strengthened with fifteen hundred turrets, each of them two hundred feet high. But though it was deemed impregnable, the wickedness of its inhabitants provoked the Most High to deliver it into the hands of Astyages, king of the Medes, who reduced it to a heap of ruins.‡

Rechoboth, the second city of Assyria mentioned by Moses, was supposed to have been seated on the Tigris, about the mouth of the river Lycus ; but no certain traces of it can be discovered.§

Calah was probably the capital city of the country Calachene, which, according to Strabo, lay somewhere [between the source of the Lycus and the Tigris,

* Jonah iv. 11.

† Rosenmuller supposes this proverbial expression to denote children under three or five years, and estimates the population of Nineveh at two millions of inhabitants. This number, he continues, may appear too small in proportion to the vast extent of ground occupied, especially when compared with the population of our European cities ; but it is to be kept in view, that the ancient cities of the East, as Pekin, Ispahan, and others at the present day, comprehended in their circuit many gardens and large spaces of vacant ground.—*Bib. Cab.* vol. ii. p. 124.—*Editor.*

‡ Rollin's *An. Hist.* vol. ii. p. 138 ; Wells' *Geog.* vol. i. pp. 124, 125.

§ Bochart. *Phal. lib.* iv. c. 22, p. 255. [The word Rechoboth signifies streets, and to distinguish it as a proper name, the inspired historian calls it Rechoboth-ir, i. e. the city Rechoboth. There was another city of the same name, but at a great distance, situated on the Euphrates, xxxvi. 37, the native city of Saul, a prince of the Edomites.]—*Editor.*

bounded on the north by Arrapachites and the Carduchian mountains, on the south by Adiabene; so that this city, and the province that was named after it lay in the far north of Assyria.*] Ptolemy also mentions a country which was named Calacine, in the same quarter. And as Pliny mentions a people called Classitæ, through whose country the Lycus runs, it is probable, that Classitæ is a corruption for Caluchitæ. This city is most probably the Halah mentioned in the 2d Book of Kings, to which Salmanassar transplanted some of the ten tribes of Israel.

Resen, the last city mentioned by Moses, which is described as a great city, lay between Nineveh and Calah, and consequently stood on the Tigris. Michaelis observes, that it was formerly the greatest city in Assyria, perhaps, in all Asia.† Geographers mention two cities in Mesopotamia: one called Rhisina, between Edessa and Mount Masius; the other Rhesena, between the rivers Chaboras and Saocoras. But as neither of these corresponds to the description of Resen given by Moses, the city of Larissa mentioned by Xenophon, has been regarded as the ancient city of Resen. It stands on the Tigris, and was a place of great strength and extent, eight miles in compass, and surrounded by a wall an hundred feet high, and twenty-five feet broad. Larissa is a Greek name, supposed to be given by Xenophon and his associates, instead of Laresen, that is, the city of Resen, which that renowned captain mistook for Larissa, the name of several Grecian cities, with which he was familiar.‡

* Lib. xvi. p. 502; Bochart. Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 23, p. 257.

† Spicil. part i. p. 217.

‡ Anab. iii. 4, 7; Bochart. Phaleg. lib. iv. c. 23, p. 257; Wells' Geog. vol. i. p. 127. [This is a conjecture of Bochart, who says, 'It is probable, that to the inquiry of the Grecian general, what city those were the ruins of? the natives would reply, Laresen, i. e. (they are the ruins) of Resen, a word which Xenophon very naturally confounded with Larissa.' In support of this explanation, Bochart gives several instances of the *le*, of, the sign of the genitive, prefixed to proper names in Hebrew, being written in translations as part of the word.]—Editor.

CHAPTER VI.

CHALDEA.

THE sacred historian, having taken a rapid view of the original settlements which the sons of Noah formed in the countries allotted to them after the deluge, proceeds to the history of a family that made a considerable figure among the Babylonians in those remote ages. This family, in whom, by the distinguishing favour of God, all nations were in future times to be blessed, originally lived in Ur of the Chaldees, till near the close of the life of Terah. To ascertain with greater accuracy the situation of this city, so celebrated for being the birth-place of Abraham, the friend of God, and the father of the chosen seed, it is necessary to make a few remarks on the country of the Chaldees.

Chaldea, the native country of Abraham, was, according to the classic writers, bounded by Mesopotamia on the north, Susiana on the east, the Persian gulf on the south, and Arabia Deserta on the west. Its capital city was Babylon, hence called by Isaiah the prophet, 'the glory of the Chaldees' excellency.' From the name of the capital the whole country was afterwards called Babylonia. Some writers, however, contend that Chaldea properly so called, was only a province of Babylonia; while others make Babylonia a province of Chaldea, namely, that part which lay about the city of Babylon. The name Babylon is un-

questionably derived from the Hebrew term Babel : and that the city was built near the place where the tower of Babel was begun, seems to be equally certain. The name Chaldea is of more doubtful origin : but, since the Chaldeans are called in Hebrew, Chasdim, it is commonly supposed they derived their name from Chesed, one of the sons of Nahor, the brother of Abraham ;* for Chesed will regularly make the plural, Chesadim, or with a small variation, Chasdim. From this term, instead of *Χασδαῖοι* Chasdæi, the Greeks formed the softer word *Χαλδαῖοι* Chaldæi.† It is therefore probable, that the Chaldees derived their name from Chesed ; but the true reason of the derivation is lost in the deep obscurity of the postdiluvian age.

In the sacred books the term Chaldea is sometimes taken in a larger sense than in the writings of the Greeks and Romans. It is evident from the words of Stephen the proto-martyr, that the country of Chaldea embraced a part of Mesopotamia :—‘ The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran, and said unto him, get thee out of this country, . . . then came he out of the land of the Chaldees, and dwelt in Charran.’ Hence it is evident, that the region of Mesopotamia, where the patriarch resided before he removed to Charran, must be included under the name of Chaldea. This is considered by some writers as a confirmation of the opinion that the name of Chaldea was originally derived from Chesed the son of Nahor, the brother of Abraham. It is plainly intimated in the sacred text, that when Terah, with his son Abraham, and his grandson Lot, the son of the deceased Haran, left Ur of the Chaldees, Nahor his other son, remained in his native country. But Nahor was the father of Chesed, who, it is conjectured, was eminently skilled in the science of astronomy, the study of which was prosecuted in Babylonia, from the first settlement

* Genesis xxii. 22.

† Wells’ Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 128.

of the province, with great diligence and success. Under his instructions, and fired by his example, his descendants, the Chasdim are supposed to have risen to great eminence among the Babylonian philosophers. And hence Ur, the native town of Chased and his family, might be called, by way of honour, Ur of the Chaldees, that is, Ur where the Chasdim, so famous for their attainments in astronomical science, reside. From this circumstance, it is not unreasonable to suppose, that a people so devoted to science as the Babylonians were, might assume the name of Chaldees, in honour of Chased, their most renowned instructor.

This opinion concerning the skill of Chased and his descendants in astronomical science, is supposed to be confirmed from the very name of the place where they lived. Ur, in the Hebrew tongue, denotes light; and hence the place where the Chasdim lived might be named Ur of the Chasdim, from their studying there, with extraordinary diligence and success, the motions of the heavenly bodies.*

From this statement it appears that Ur was situated in the north-eastern part of Mesopotamia, which was sometimes included under the name of Chaldea. This position agrees both with the words of Stephen already quoted, and the writings of Ammianus Marcellinus, who mentions a city of this name, lying between the Tigris and the city of Nisibis.† Some writers place the native town of Terah and Abraham, near the lake of Babylon, where once stood the city Urchoa, supposed by them to be the same with Ur. But the lakes of Babylon, and by consequence the city Urchoa, were on this side of the river Euphrates; while Joshua says expressly, that Terah, the father of Abraham, and the

* Wells' Historical Geography, vol. i. p. 130.

† Chap. xxv. 7, 8. [Rosenmuller is of opinion that this, better than any other place, answers to the Ur-Casdim, for this additional reason, that 'in the same district of country where lay the Ur of Ammianus, Xenophon found, at the foot of the Kurdish Mountains, a people called Chaldeans.]-Editor.

father of Nahor, dwelt on the other side of the flood (or Euphrates) in old time.* Again, from Ur in Mesopotamia, near the Tigris, the way to Canaan, whither Terah intended to go, was directly by Haran; but if he had resided by the lakes of Babylonia, his direct way had been through Arabia Deserta; or if to avoid that inhospitable desert, he had chosen a more northerly rout, still his direct road lay considerably south from Haran.†

Haran is, in the Septuagint and in the New Testament, rendered Charran, and in classic authors Charræ. This city was built by Terah, and named Haran, in memory of his deceased son, the father of Lot. It stood in the west, or north-west part of Mesopotamia, on a river known to the Greek writers by the same name, which flows into the river Chaboras, the Chebar, one of the tributary streams of the Euphrates. [It was the principal abode of the Sabians, or worshippers of the heavenly bodies, who had a celebrated temple there. It was one of the towns which the predecessors of Sennacherib captured.‡ It rose afterwards to be a great

* Joshua xxiv. 2.

† The birthplace of Abraham is supposed to have been on the site of the modern town Orfa, which, according to the missionary Wolff, is by an immemorial tradition of the oriental Jews, still called Ur of the Chaldees, and is, on account of its venerable associations, resorted to by many pilgrims. It lies two days' journey east from the Euphrates, and sixty-seven miles north-east from Beer, in 70° north latitude. Mr Buckingham describes the modern town as a pleasant and comfortable situation, plentifully supplied with good water, which issues chiefly from a beautiful fountain at the south-western extremity of the town, which pours its limpid streams into a small lake called 'the lake of Abraham the beloved.' Anciently, however, the aspect of the surrounding country at least was very different, Ammianus Marcellinus describing the whole region as a desolate wilderness, where there was a scarcity of all the necessaries of life, and which was fit only for the occasional resort of nomadic shepherds. If it was as barren and uninviting in the days of Abraham, we may easily judge how attractive, in the eyes of a pastoral chief as he was, would be the promise of a rich and luxuriant land like Canaan.—*Editor*.

‡ Isaiah xxxvii. 12.

and flourishing town, which carried on an extensive trade with Tyre,* for which its situation was exceedingly favourable, as it was the point whence the great road leading from the Euphrates to the countries of the east branched off.] In more recent times, it became famous among the Romans for the total defeat of their army by the Parthians, and the death of Crassus their general, who was killed in the battle.†

In obedience to the command of God, who appeared to Abraham in Mesopotamia, Terah, with all his family except Nahor, left the land of his fathers, and proceeded to Haran, on his way to Canaan, the future inheritance of his remote descendants. In that city Terah ended his days ; and after his death, Abraham, in consequence of a second admonition, prosecuted his journey to the land of promise.

SUPPLEMENTARY OBSERVATIONS ON ASSYRIA, CHALDEA, AND MESOPOTAMIA.

[The country where the heaven-defying conspiracy of Babel had been formed, and where the usurper Nimrod afterwards established an iron despotism on the ruins of the primitive patriarchal government, was, as has already been remarked, distinguished by the name of Shinar, or 'the scattering,' a name commemorative of the signal overthrow of the builders of the tower, and

* Ezekiel xxvii. 23.

† Wells' Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 132. [This place having preserved its name through all succeeding ages, there is no difficulty or doubt about its site. Haran, according to Buckingham, is eight hours, according to Niebuhr's guide, two days' journey south-south-east from Orfa, and it lies in the direct road to the ford of the Euphrates at Rakka, which is the nearest, and every way the most convenient route to Palestine. By the same way by which Abraham travelled from Ur to the land of promise, the invading armies of Alexander, Antiochus, Trajan, and Julian, passed at different periods into Chaldea.]—*Editor*.

it seems to have retained that designation among the people of God ever after, at least so far as we have evidence, down to the time of Daniel.* The growing splendour of Babylon, however, which in the days of that prophet had reached its zenith, and had drawn towards itself the admiration and tribute of the whole world, had totally eclipsed the memory of that appalling dispensation, and by a natural and very common transition, the whole district had come to be called by the name of the capital to which it owed all its importance and glory. At first the word Babylonia was restricted to the country that lay around Babylon, but in process of time it came to be applied in a larger sense, as embracing that extensive territory that is bounded on the north by Mesopotamia, on the south by the Persian Gulf, on the east by the Tigris, and on the west by Arabia Deserta, *i. e.* on either side of the Shat-el-Arab, the united stream of the Euphrates and the Tigris, though in both of these latter directions the limits varied considerably at different periods. It thus corresponded to the modern province of Irak-el-Arabia. Whether, as some suppose, it was from a colony of Chaldeans, who were planted on the south-west borders by the Assyrians, or whether it arose from that people being afterwards associated with the Babylonians under the same government, Babylonia and Chaldea came to be interchangeable terms, the latter term being invariably used by Jeremiah and Ezekiel in the same extensive sense with the former.

[The country all around Babylon has been celebrated from the earliest times for the pure and salubrious air of the climate, as well as for the extraordinary productiveness of the soil. Although at certain seasons of the year the heat is intense, yet the atmosphere is generally dry and temperate. And although rain seldom falls, yet availing themselves of the periodical overflow of the Euphrates, by which the whole country

* Daniel i, 2.

was inundated, and became as it were 'a desert of the sea,'* the ancient inhabitants cut numerous canals or sluices along which they directed the streams, and when necessary made use of machines for forcing and diffusing the water; thus, along with the refreshing moisture, securing a rich deposit of fresh earth, brought down from the mountains, by which their fields were both irrigated and fattened. With a soil so favoured by nature, and so judiciously cultivated by human industry, no wonder that the most glowing descriptions have been transmitted to us of a fertility that has seldom been equalled, never surpassed. Herodotus, Strabo, and many others, concur in declaring that the land was so well adapted for corn, that it generally yielded two hundred, and in very favourable seasons three hundred fold;—a statement which, extraordinary as it seems, is confirmed by the testimony of a modern traveller, who declares that 'there cannot be a doubt, if proper means were taken, that this country would with ease be brought into a high state of culture.' Might it not have been these well known capabilities of the land of Shinar that attracted the attention of the sagacious and aspiring Nimrod, and invited him to effect a settlement there, where, moreover, the way for the invasion of his followers seemed so easy, in consequence of the flight and dispersion of its former inhabitants.†

* Isaiah xxi. 1.

† 'Those splendid accounts of the Babylonian lands,' says Captain Mignan, 'yielding two or three hundred fold, compared with the modern face of the country, afford a remarkable proof of the singular desolation to which it has been subjected. The canals, by which it was so plentifully watered, can only be traced by their decayed banks.' 'The Divine malediction,' says Mr Bell, 'seems not only to have been verified on Babylon itself, but on the whole surrounding region also; so that what was once the residence of a powerful and wealthy people,—what was once filled with numerous and populous cities and villages,—what was once the abode of civilization, agriculture, manufactures, and commerce,—and where temples and trophies reared their heads in every direction, is now

[Washed by the two great navigable rivers, the Euphrates and the Tigris, Babylonia was most advantageously situated for commerce, inasmuch as the productions of Syria and Asia Minor could be carried down the first, the exports of Armenia and Media conveyed along the latter, while the Persian Gulf on the south opened a passage for the admission up the Pasitigris, or Shat-el-Arab, of the treasures of Arabia, Persia, India, Egypt, and every part of Africa. To give a detailed account of the wide commercial relations which this country maintained with almost every quarter of the then inhabitable world, would far exceed our limits, suffice it therefore to say that, in point of fact, so extensive was the scale on which traffic was carried on, that Babylonia is styled 'a land of traffic; the city of merchants.'*

[' Various branches of home manufacture were also encouraged and cultivated with great spirit and enterprise, some of which were carried to so high a pitch of perfection as to become regular articles of export, in return for the foreign commodities of art and luxury, of which Babylonia was the depôt. In particular,

a sterile desert, except on the immediate banks of the Euphrates, where here and there a village or a camp of wandering Arabs may perchance be met with.' 'This extensive region,' says Gibbon, was filled with villages and towns; the fertile soil was in a high state of cultivation.'—*Editor*.

* Ezekiel xvii. 4. [' That the Babylonians possessed a maritime navigation when their power was at its height, may be gathered in general from the predictions of the contemporary Jewish prophet Isaiah :—" Thus saith the Lord their deliverer : for your sakes have I sent to Babel, and thrown to the ground all their nobles, and the Chaldeans, who exult in their ships," chap. xliii. 14. This is a graphic description of a people no less proud of their ships than of their gates and ramparts. But more definite information is preserved to us in the Greek writers, who deserve the utmost attention of the historical inquirer. Æschylus, in one of his plays, enumerating the nations who composed the armies of the great king, speaks as follows :—Babylon, too, that abounds in gold, sends forth a promiscuous multitude, who both embark in ships, and boast of their skill in archery.'—*Heeren on the Politics, Commerce, &c. of the Asiatic Nations*.—*Editor*.

'carpets,' one of the principal objects of luxury in the East, the floors of the rich being generally covered with them, were no where so finely woven, and in such splendid colours, as at Babylon. Particular representations were seen on them of those wonderful Indian animals, the griffin and others, with which we have become acquainted by the ruins of Persepolis, whence the knowledge of them was brought to the west. Foreign nations made use of these carpets in the decoration of their harems and royal saloons; indeed this species of luxury seems no where to have been carried farther than among the Persians. Not only the floors, but even the beds and sofas in the houses of their nobles, were covered with two or three of these carpets; nay, the oldest of their sacred edifices, the tomb of Cyrus at Pasargada, was ornamented with a purple one of Babylonian workmanship.

['Babylonian garments were not less esteemed; those in particular called sindones were in very high repute. It appears that they were usually of cotton, and the most costly were so highly valued for their brilliancy of colour, and fineness of texture, as to be compared to those of Media, and set apart for royal use. The superiority of Babylonian robes and carpets will not be a matter of surprise when we consider how near Babylon was to Carmania on the one side, and to Arabia and Syria on the other, and that in these countries the finest cotton was produced.

['Large weaving establishments were not confined to the capital, but existed likewise in other cities and inferior towns of Babylonia, which Semiramis is said to have built on the banks of the Euphrates and the Tigris, and which she appointed as marts for those who imported Median and Persian goods. These manufacturing towns also were staples for land traffic. The most famous of them was Borsippa, situated on the Euphrates, fifteen miles below Babylon, and mentioned in history before the time of Cyrus. These

were the principal linen and cotton manufactories, and they still existed in the time of Strabo.*

[To this country belongs the honour of commencing the rudiments of physical science, particularly of astronomy. Its cool and serene atmosphere, together with the pastoral habits of the original inhabitants, who spread themselves, by night as well as by day, over the flat and level plains, early drew attention to the phenomena of the sky; and in process of time, as society advanced, the observations which preceding ages had made, and carefully registered, on the state of the weather and the motions of the heavenly bodies, became a branch of study, which, both from the facilities the climate afforded, and the peculiar importance attached to it, was cultivated by the Babylonians with extraordinary ardour and success. During the entire history of the Babylonian empire, the national taste ran strongly in this direction, although it must be acknowledged that in later times it was fostered not so much from a pure love and devotion to science, as from blind credulity in the supposed influence of the stars on the fortunes of men, and the events of this lower world. So far was this superstition carried, that no matter of importance, whether in public or in private life,—neither war nor peace could be proclaimed,—neither a journey undertaken, nor a building commenced, nor an engagement contracted,—till means had been adopted for ascertaining the favourable or unfavourable aspect of the heavens. This much-valued knowledge resided with a privileged caste of literati, who, like the same order among the Egyptians and Persians, were probably divided into several classes, as magicians, astrologers, sorcerers, soothsayers, stargazers, monthly prognosticators, &c.; but all of whom went under the distinguishing name of wise men, or Chasdim, *i. e.* Chaldeans. The prodigious influence the sages of Babylonia had acquired by the successful

* Heeren on the Politics, &c., of Asiatic Nations.

application of their pretended science, is evident from the official station they held at court, and from their forming a prominent part in the retinue of the monarch, in all his royal progresses or exhibitions of state. On the triumphal entry of Nebuchadnezzar into Jerusalem, Jeremiah mentions, among others of his courtly attendants, the chief of the Magi.*

[‘ Respecting the government of this country, some few particulars have been preserved, principally by the prophet Daniel. A ruler with despotic power ; a court in which eunuchs held the highest offices ; an empire divided into satrapies, governed by rulers, among whom a regular gradation of rank and title was found, and where the civil and military offices were often, though not always, separated ; collectors of tribute in the provinces ; higher and inferior judges. We find also a priestcraft or priesthood comprised under the names of Magians and Chaldeans, and which, principally by astrology and soothsaying, had a considerable influence upon the government. In what relation to society did this class stand ? and how came the term Chaldeans, which originally belonged to a people, to become the name of the priesthood ? These are questions which have been often agitated, but, from want of sufficient information, can never be satisfactorily answered. Although Babylon did not become a mighty empire till after the Chaldean conquest, yet every thing leads us to suppose that it had long before been the seat of science and civilization, though principally confined to the order of priests. Unless this had been the case, how could those great works, more especially the mighty canals and lakes, ascribed to their earlier rulers, without which the city could not have existed, or the land have been cultivated, have been executed ? There is no doubt that astronomy formed a great branch of their learning ; and whatever opinion may be formed of the degree of perfection to which they had carried these

* Isaiah xlvii. 13 ; Daniel i. 20 ; ii. 2 ; iv. 7 ; v. 11.

sciences, it seems an indisputable fact, that, at the time of Alexander's conquest, astronomical observations were imputed to them, which are affirmed to reach back for nineteen centuries. Astrology, however, was the chief support of the Magians and the priesthood, and it was principally by its practice that they maintained their authority and influence in the state. They formed the chief caste in Babylon. It is certainly possible that, according to rule, the son succeeded the father; but that the priest-caste was not strictly hereditary, that even foreigners might be admitted to this office, if their previous education had fitted them for it, is shown by the example of Daniel and his companions.* At their head was the high Magian, whose influence was so great, that upon the death of the father of Nebuchadnezzar, he administered the affairs of the empire until after the arrival of that prince from Judea. They dwelt not only in the capital, but also in various places, and among others, probably in establishments, of which the mound of bricks, as at Akkerkoof, Al Himar, and Borsippa, where was one of their principal schools, are the remains. Their connexion with the kings is clearly shown from the history of Nebuchadnezzar. Their influence was founded on their knowledge; but their power seems never to have been so great as in the Persian court, if we may judge from the manner in which they were treated by Nebuchadnezzar; unless, indeed, we may attribute this to the personal character of that formidable conqueror.†

[Chaldea, though as has been already remarked, it came eventually to be synonymous with Babylonia, was strictly speaking a separate and remote district to the northward, situated among the Carduchian mountains (now the seat of the Curds), and anciently inhabited by a people called Chasdim, who, in all probability were descendants of Kesed, son of Nahor. They were a horde of roving mountaineers, who in-

* Daniel i. 4.

† Heeren, vol. ii. p. 188-193.

spired terror by their warlike habits, and lived by committing lawless depredations on the pastoral tribes in their neighbourhood, but who on the Assyrians pushing the tide of conquest north and westward, fell under the power of that rising dynasty, and were, according to a favourite plan of their conquerors, removed from their native mountains to the south-west of Babylonia, to serve as mercenaries in repelling the troublesome attacks of the Arabs on their confines. These marauders, being gradually reduced to the discipline of their masters, were afterwards incorporated with the native Babylonians, and formed the main strength of the Assyrian army, insomuch that to their feats of daring and persevering valour Salmanasar was indebted for his success at Tyre.* Nay, it appears that so steadily did they advance in power and influence in their adopted country, that after the reign of Esarhaddon, the Chaldeans furnished the race of kings that sat on the throne of the Assyrian empire, which in this Chaldaeo-Babylonian form, rose to an extent and a splendour of which the world had seen no previous example. Of this dynasty Nabopalassar was the first, and when, after a long and prosperous reign, he found himself in his old age opposed by Pharaoh-Necho, who succeeded in gaining over some of the remoter provinces to the Egyptian yoke, he adopted into his government his son and successor Nebuchadnezzar, a young prince of a most aspiring and determined spirit, by whose energetic conduct not only the revolted provinces were recovered from the arms of the king of Egypt, but resolving by way of reprisals to carry his troops to the territories of his adversary, he invaded Judea, laid waste Jerusalem, and erected the Assyrian flag successively in Tyre, Moab, Ammon, Edom, and

* Habakkuk i. 6. [The Chaldean cavalry were proverbial for swiftness, courage, and cruelty, and are compared by the prophet to leopards, which are allowed to be the fleetest of all quadrupeds.]

—Editor.

Egypt.* His reign which, after his return from foreign conquests, was spent in embellishing his palace and enlarging his capital, which, with the tribute that poured into his treasury from his subjugated provinces, he was enabled to do on a scale of great magnificence, lasted for forty-three years. But after his death the reins of government fell into the hands of a weak and dissolute prince, Evil-Merodach, who being assassinated in the second year after his accession, was succeeded by his son Belshazzar, and he being a minor, the executive authority was prudently and energetically wielded by his mother. But all her great talents and influence could not arrest the rapidly waning power of the kingdom, and in the year 538 B. C., just twenty-three years after the time of Nebuchadnezzar, the city and empire which that mighty prince had done so much to exalt and consolidate, fell an easy prey to the arms of Cyrus, who thenceforth took Babylonia within the pale of that vast Medo-Persian empire he founded, comprehending every country of western Asia.

[It only remains to be noticed, as connected with sacred history, that the gospel was at a very early period preached in the province of Chaldæo-Babylonia; that the apostle Peter is said to have written both his epistles from Babylon, and that by the proclamation of the truth in that desolate region the prediction of the Psalmist was verified, ‘I will make mention of Rahab and *Babylon* to them that know me:’ this man was born there.†

[Assyria Proper, which lay north of the region now mentioned, was compressed within nearly the same limits as the modern Kurdistan. As to its natural features, this country was rugged and mountainous towards the north, while its southern parts spread out

* 2 Kings xxiv.; Jer. lli. 27; Ezek. xxv.; xxix. 18.

† It appears certain, however, that, in the days of our Lord, Babylon was completely destroyed; and Sir J. Newton, in his *Observations on the Apocalypse*, says, that the ancients and moderns generally agree that Peter i. v. 13, meant Rome by Babylon.—*Editor*.

in as level and extensive plains as those of the neighbouring province, rivalled them also in fertility, inso-much that no better nor juster description, in the opinion of Rauwolff, can be given of it than that of the Assyrian general Rabshakeh, 'a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of oil-olive, and of honey.* Besides the Tigris, which washes its western boundary from north to south, two other streams contribute to fertilize it, the Lycus, now called the great Zab, and the Kuros, now called by the Turks the Golden River. In the book of Ezra mention is made of another river, the Ahava, on whose banks that pious patriot assembled the Hebrew captives, whom, after solemn fasting and prayer, he conducted to Canaan. But whether it was either of the two just named, or another stream which has now disappeared, cannot be ascertained.†

[The heat of the climate is, at certain seasons, intense to a degree so as to be nearly intolerable; and, as this was a subject of bitter complaint with the peevish and irritated prophet who was commissioned to pronounce the doom of the populous and profligate capital Nineveh, the following observations of a traveller relative to the extreme sultriness of the weather may be interesting to the reader, especially as they were written on the site of that ancient city. 'It was

* 2 Kings xviii. 32.

† Ezra viii. 31. [According to the testimony of Mr Rich, who was in Koordistan in 1820, this province is still distinguished by its productiveness. 'The usual increase of grain,' says he, 'is about five to ten to one of seed; fifteen is an extraordinary good crop. Last year the crops of grain were bad, and yielded only two; wheat and barley are sown alternately in the same ground. In the plains, the ground is not allowed to be fallow; but is relieved by alternating the crops of wheat and barley. In the hilly country, the land must rest every other year. Cotton, rice, hemp, Indian corn, millet, lentiles, are grown, and the castor-oil plant is cultivated all over Koordistan, sometimes in separate fields, sometimes mixed with cotton. As in ancient times, a great quantity of honey, of the finest quality, is produced here,—the bees are kept in hives of mud.—See farther in Rich's Koordistan, vol. i. p. 132.]

early in the evening,' says Mr Campbell, 'when the pointed turrets of Mousel opened on our view, and communicated no very unpleasant sensations to my heart. I found myself on scripture ground, and could not help feeling some portion of the pride of the traveller, when I reflected that I was now within sight of Nineveh, renowned in holy writ. The city is seated in a very barren sandy plain, on the banks of the Tigris. The external view of the town is much in its favour, being encompassed with stately walls of solid stone, over which the steeples or minarets, and other lofty buildings, are shown with increased effect. But though the outside be so beautiful, the inside is most detestible; the heat is so intense that in the middle of the day there is no stirring out, and even at night the walls of the houses are so heated by the day's sun, as to produce a disagreeable heat to the body at a foot, or even a yard from them. However, I entered it with spirit, because I considered it as the last stage of the worst part of my pilgrimage. But, alas! I was disappointed in my expectations, for the Tigris was dried up by the intensity of the heat, and an unusual long drought, and I was obliged to take the matter patiently, and accommodate my mind to a journey. *Besides this, the ordinary heat of the climate is extremely dangerous to the blood and lungs, and even to the skin, which it blisters and peels from the flesh, affecting the eyes so much, that travellers are obliged to wear a transparent covering over them to keep the heat off.**

[The situation of Nineveh, the capital of Assyria, was even more advantageous than that of Babylon for commerce. This city, in fact, was the great emporium both of Eastern and Western Asia; and so extensive were its harbours, so immense was the traffic it carried on, and such multitudes flocked to it, as affording the best opening for commercial intercourse in the ancient world, that, in the words of Nahum, 'she had multi-

* Overland Journey to India, part ii. p. 130.

plied her merchants above the stars of heaven.* Her boundless wealth naturally introduced among her inhabitants a taste for the most effeminate luxuriousness, and this again was followed by the grossest corruption of manners, which characterized all ranks. The doom of this most dissolute city, which Jonah was commissioned to proclaim, was, on the timely repentance of the king and people, suspended for a while ; but, forgetting the Divine forbearance, and intoxicated with the extraordinary streams of wealth and prosperity which her merchantmen continued to pour into her, the Ninevites plunged more deeply than before into vices and impurities of the most infamous description ;† so that the righteous indignation of Heaven was, through the prophet Nahum, again denounced against them, as a fearful warning to the nations, and without fail let loose in the very manner which the prophetic pen of Nahum almost literally described.‡ For although Nineveh had stood many a former attack, from which its enemies retired in disappointment and disgrace, and although Cyaxares and Nebuchadnezzar, both of whom threw off the Assyrian yoke, had been lying with their united forces before its walls for three years, without making any sensible progress in the siege, its capture and overthrow was accomplished in an easy and unexpected manner. The river, swollen by a long continuance of rain, forced a breach in the walls to the extent of two miles and a half. Through this gap the besiegers rushed in and surprised the inhabitants, who, deeming themselves in perfect security, and overcome with wine, were incapable of making any resistance. The story goes, adds Diodorus, that the king, remembering an old prophecy that his capital would never be taken but by the river, no sooner learned that the impetuous stream had demolished a part of his fortifications, than considering the prediction accomplished, and his fate

* Nahum iii. 16.

† Nahum iii. 1-4.

‡ Nahum i. 8, 10 ; ii. 6 ; iii. 11-17.

sealed, he raise an immense funeral pile, on which he destroyed himself, together with his family, his palace, and all his treasures. Thus fell the proud and dissolute Nineveh, and, according to the declaration of the same prophet, who predicted its fate, it has never risen from its ashes.*

The kingdom of Assyria Proper was more extensive than this country, the land of Nimrod, since, besides Kurdistan, it comprehended Diarbekr, or Algezira, and Irak-el-Arabia. This kingdom, which afterwards attained to so great power and extent, continued for a long period within narrow limits. Pul is the first Assyrian king under whom its territory began to be enlarged; and the first expedition this prince is recorded to have undertaken, was the invasion of Israel, which kingdom he reduced, and compelled its king, Menahem, to become his tributary.† His successor, Tiglath-pileser, commiserating the helpless situation of Ahaz, the king of Judah, who purchased his aid at an enormous bribe, took advantage of the occasion, not only to espouse the quarrel of his Jewish ally, but to add the territories of the confederate kings of Israel and Syria to his Assyrian dominions.‡ Shalmaneser, who succeeded him, not only held a firm hand over Hoshea, the king of Israel, as his tributary,§ but on that vassal betraying symptoms of rebellion, he marched to Samaria, and after a siege of three years, reduced the Israelitish kingdom to the level of a conquered province of Assyria; and having transplanted the great proportion of the inhabitants to Mesopotamia, and the adjoining parts, replenished the depopulated Israel with colonies from his native country.|| Sennacherib, another of the Assyrian princes, determined on adding Judea to his already overgrown empire, surprised several outposts, by rapid marches, before Hezekiah was apprised of his

* See this fully illustrated by Dr Keith, p. 264.

† 2 Kings xv. 19.

§ 2 Kings xvii. 3.

‡ 2 Kings xv. 29; xvi. 9.

|| 2 Kings xvii. 6, 24; xviii. 9, 10, 11.

invasion. The haughty conqueror, not content with the submission and tribute of the Jewish monarch, demanded the surrender of Jerusalem, and despatched Rabshakeh, his general, to press his claims with the most insolent menaces. But ere he could put his threats into execution, he suffered an irreparable loss,—the angel of the Lord, by the agency of a hot pestilential wind, having destroyed not less than 185,000 of the blasphemer's army in a single night,—a disaster which compelled him hurriedly to leave Palestine and return to Assyria, where, three years after, he was assassinated by his two sons.* On the flight of the parricides, Esarhaddon, or Sardanapalus ascended the throne, of whom we have little account, except of his disastrous end, which was accomplished, when Cyaxares the Mede, and Nebuchadnezzar the Chaldean, impatient of his yoke, besieged him in his capital, Nineveh, and by the fall of that city overthrew the empire of Assyria, 601 B.C.

[Mesopotamia, the name given by the ancient Greeks to that territory which is inclosed between the Tigris and the Euphrates, now Algezira, was bounded on the east by Assyria, or Kurdistan, and Babylonia, or Irak-el-Arabia; on the south by the Syrian Desert; on the west by Syria and Asia; and on the north by Great and Little Armenia. Being originally the settlement of the descendants of Aram, it was thence called Aram Naharaim, or Aram of the Rivers; and while this appellation was applied to the whole extent of Mesopotamia, the western part was distinguished by the name of Padan-Aram, or the field of Aram, from its rich and fertile plains. To the reader of the Bible, its name is connected with the most interesting associations, being the scene of Jacob's adventures,† and the birth-place of all his family but Benjamin,—the residence of Balaam,‡ the seat of the first oppressor of Israel,§ and one of the most celebrated conquests of David.||

* 2 Kings xix. 35-37.

† Gen. xxix.

‡ Deut. xxiii. 4.

§ Judges iii. 8.

|| 2 Samuel x. 16-19.

In climate and soil it varies ; the northern part being hilly, elevated, but yet well watered, and abounding in excellent pastures ; the middle, or Mesopotamia Proper, being flat and level, and capable of yielding every kind of grain and fruit ; while the southern part is desert. The only river, besides the Euphrates and Tigris, that is mentioned in Scripture, is the Chaboras, or Chebar, which rises in Mount Mash* (Mons Masius, now Judi), and is celebrated for its delicious waters, and its beautiful banks. It was along this broad and navigable stream, at Tel-abib,† that Nebuchadnezzar established that colony of the captive Jews, to which Ezekiel repaired.‡ So attached did many of the colonists become to this lovely spot, that on the issuing of Cyrus' edict, granting to all Jews permission to return to the land of their fathers, a great many declined to avail themselves of the privilege ; and that amid all the successive revolutions in the land of their adoption, they continued to preserve the character and cherish a regard for the religious institutions of Israel, is evident from the numbers who had repaired to the Passover at Jerusalem, and who, being converted on hearing Peter's discourse, introduced the truth as it is in Jesus into Mesopotamia on their return.

[PERSIA.]

[Persia Proper, called also Fars, or Farsistan, and by the natives Iran, was and still is bounded on the north by Ecbatana and Parthia (Irak-adjemi), on the south by the Persian gulf, on the east by Caramania (Kerman), and on the west by Susiana (Chusistan). Anciently, however, along with the country of Persia strictly so called, the name included also the province of Elam, which lay to the west of it ; and, under the

* Genesis x. 23.

† Ezekiel iii. 15.

‡ Ezekiel i. 1, 3 ; iii. 15, 23 ; x. 15, 22.

united monarchy of the Medes and Persians, it comprehended Media also, which was situated on the north.

[*Physical Geography*.—The general character of this country, including the adjacent provinces, may be described as poor and unproductive in soil. The southern extremity, which lies along the gulf, is a vast plain of sand, uninhabitable on account of the extreme drought, and the prevalence of hot pestilential winds that frequently sweep along its heated surface. Many parts, too, are intersected by extensive valleys, so full of sand and small stones as to be incapable of cultivation. Towards the north and west, it presents the appearance of a rugged and mountainous country; and, what is a remarkable feature in a region of this description, it possesses but a scanty and precarious supply of water, the rivers being few in number and diminutive in size, and for the most part emptying themselves, not into the sea, but into lakes in the interior, which are often wholly dried up in summer. Those mountains, the lofty summits of which are for one half of the year or more constantly covered with snow, render the climate in the northern part cold and moist, while at the same time they exert a most genial influence upon the interior of the country, contributing to temper the violence of the heat, which would otherwise in the summer season be intolerable, and to produce the finest salubrity. The midland districts present a complete contrast to the northern and eastern extremities of the country, spreading out into rich and beautiful valleys, which, adorned with flourishing plantations, and watered by innumerable rivulets, yield in extraordinary luxuriance those natural productions for which Persia has always been famous,—wheat and rice (the grains best adapted for the soil), figs, pomegranates, almonds, mulberries, peaches, and apricots,—fruits which are indigenous to this country; besides the fine breed of horses, cattle, and sheep, which are similar to those of Europe, and second to none in the world, and are reared on the pasture-meas-

dows with the greatest care. The vines of Shiraz, the oranges of Merdasht, the luxuriant foliage of the trees, the varied notes of the būlbūl or nightingale, the perpetual spring, both in flowers, and the melody of the woods, which reign in those happy spots, are the favourite theme of the native bards; while the pigeons which appear in such prodigious flocks in the neighbourhood of towns and villages, and the wild asses that roam in the central deserts, are noticed by all travellers as not less characteristic features of the land. With regard to mineral productions, iron and copper are plentiful; whole deserts are covered over with sulphur and salt, and mineral springs abound, although the low state of science does not admit of their being sources of any benefit to the public. Pearls are found in the Persian Gulf. Of commerce and manufactures, this country has nothing that deserves the name, with the exception of its bows and sabres, its silks and brocades, its cloth of goat and camel's hair, and its carpets, a few of which are exported to Europe at exorbitant prices.

[The only place of consequence which it falls within our province to notice in this country, is Shushan or Susa (supposed by some to be the modern Shouster), the capital of Elam or Susiana, lying near the river Ulai (Eulæus). The foundation of this city is said to have been laid before the era of the Trojan war, and its name was suggested by the vast number of lilies that grew in the neighbourhood. Susiana was an independent kingdom, governed by Abradates, the friend and ally of Cyrus, into whose power it fell on the death of its native prince; and soon after, the beauty of its locality and the extraordinary mildness of its climate, made it be preferred to imperial Babylon for the winter quarters of the Persian monarch;* Ecbatana being his summer

* The heat about Shushan in summer is so great, that the inhabitants are obliged to pass the day in subterranean apartments, and to sleep at night on the flat roofs of the houses.—*Editor*.

residence. This city continued to be the favourite of his royal successors, one of whom especially, Darius Hystaspes (Ahasuerus), erected it into a place of great magnificence. Its walls embraced a circuit of thirteen miles and a half ; but within this vast extent of ground, were comprehended the royal enclosures and the spacious policies, where the Persian monarchs delighted, as fancy led them, to hunt, to pitch their summer pavilions, or to hold their luxurious entertainments, of which a splendid example is given in the history of Esther.* In this city were kept the private treasures of the kings of Persia, of the prodigious amount of which an estimate may be formed by the fact of Alexander finding the immense sum of 50,000 talents of gold in the royal castle, besides 25,000 discovered by Antigonus, and more that were, in all probability, previously concealed or withdrawn. But far more than for the splendour of the buildings and the dignity and importance bestowed upon it, from being the seat of the Persian court, it has been rendered illustrious from its being the abode of Daniel, under the reign of Belshazzar, and the scene of his vision of the ram and he-goat. Of this place, however, with which so many associations of grandeur are connected, no traces remain but a confused heap of rubbish. ‘The ruins of Susa,’ says Sir R. K. Porter, ‘in themselves present an appearance not at all unlike those of Babylon, being a succession of similar mounds covered with fragments of bricks, tiles, &c., and stretching over a space of country to the extent of ten or twelve miles. Of these mounds, two stand pre-eminent, and of immense expanse, one being in circumference a mile, and the other nearly two ; their height measures about 150 feet. They are composed of huge masses of sun-dried bricks, and courses of burnt brick and mortar, and stand not very far from the banks of the Kerrah or Kara-su, from whose eastern shore the vestiges of this famous capital are yet traceable nearly to the banks of the

* Esther i. 5.

Abzal, approaching the town of Desphoul. The people of the country distinguish these two great mounds by the names of the "Castle" and the "Palace;" and at the foot of the largest appears a little dome-like building, under which travellers are shown the tomb of the prophet Daniel. A dervise resides there, impressed with a belief of its peculiar sanctity, and who points to the grave of the inspired son of Judah with as much homage as if it belonged to one of his own most respected imauns. Though covered by this modern structure, no doubt is held by Jew, Arab, or Mussulman of the great antiquity of the tomb beneath; all having the same tradition, that it indeed contains the remains of the prophet.

['The site of this once noble metropolis of the ancient princes of Persia is now a mere wilderness, given up to beasts of prey; no human being disputing their right, except the poor dervise, who keeps watch over the tomb of the prophet. The friend to whom I am indebted for this outline, passed the night under the same protection, listening to the screams of hyænas, and the roaring of lions, wandering around its solitary walls.'*]

[The river Ulai or Eulæus washed a great part of the city Shushan, almost surrounding it; and whether from the copiousness and purity of its waters, or from associations of some other kind, it was held sacred by the inhabitants. It is supposed to be the Abzal which flows through the province of Chusistan, and touches what are the supposed ruins of ancient Susa.]

[The government of Persia was vested in the person of one despotic ruler, whose counsels were assisted by a number of satraps or viceroys. These were the seven princes of Media and Persia, "who saw the king's face,

* *Travels*, vol. ii. p. 411. Persepolis, so famed for containing the palace and tombs of the Persian monarchs, and for its wonderful ruins, is not noticed here, in consequence of its not occurring in Scripture.—*Editor*.

and sat first in the kingdom," constituting the supreme council of the empire, by whose advice the ordinary course of the government was carried on.* Subordinate to these, and possessing merely a delegated authority, were the governors of provinces, of which, in the time of Darius, there were 120, and in the time of Ahasuerus 127,† who were empowered, as provincial magistrates or lieutenants of counties, to regulate all matters connected with appointments to offices, and the administration of justice within their bounds. They were bound to reside within the province over which they presided; and it was only on great emergencies, such as the contemplation of a war, or in critical affairs involving the general interests of the nation, that they were allowed to leave the seat of their governments, those inferior satraps as well as the generals of the army being summoned to attend the deliberations of the privy council.‡

[Of the luxurious habits of the ancient court of Persia, and the pomp of state which the monarchs were fond of displaying, an illustration has been given in another part of this work.§ To that statement it may be interesting to subjoin, in this place, the following observations of Rosenmuller:—"In the ruins of Persepolis, there are found various delineations of the Per-

* Ezra vii. 12-14; Esther i. 14. It is well known that the seven Persian nobles who conspired against the pretender Smerdis, and placed Darius on the throne, reserved to themselves the right to approach and advise with the king at all times. In all probability, this was the origin of the supreme council of seven. The seven chamberlains mentioned in Esther i. 10, were the eunuchs or officers of the royal harem.—*Editor*.

† The discrepancy in Daniel and Esther is easily reconciled. Cyrus, after settling his affairs at Babylon, paid a visit to his father and mother in Persia. Returning through Media, he married the daughter of his uncle, Darius, who being pressed to accompany him, accepted the invitation, came into Persia, and by his advice the country was divided by Cyrus into 120 provinces. Seven more were added by the conquests of Cambyses and Darius Hystaspes. Over these, according to Daniel, were placed three presidents or supreme acting overseers.—*Editor*.

‡ Rosenmuller, *Bib. Geog.* vol. ii. p. 243.

§ *Manners and Customs*, vol. i. pp. 355, 356.

sian monarchs seated upon their throne in royal state ; and as these were doubtless executed by contemporary artists, their correctness cannot be questioned. One of them answers very closely to the description given in Esther v. 1, 2. The king appears in the full attire of royalty ; under his feet is the golden footstool, that was always carried before him ; in his right hand he holds the golden sceptre ; in his left, according to Heeren, the holy vessel which was used in sacrifice. ‘Immediately behind,’ continues Heeren, ‘stands a eunuch (known by his almost female dress and figure), with a fly-fan in his hand, and his face muffled. The throne or royal chair is supported by three rows of male figures, which are placed above one another, with their arms lifted up ; as each has a different garb and head-dress, they are evidently intended to represent different nations, and thus the whole is a figurative representation of the *extent of the kingdom*, and the *greatness of the king*. The first figure has the complete Medo-Persian dress, an intimation that this was the first nation in point of rank, yet were they servants of the king as well as the rest. In one of the lower figures, Niebuhr assures us, may be clearly discovered the Negro profile, and the woolly Negro hair, and it would hence appear, that the sculptor has selected partly the most remote, partly the most distinguished nations, in order thereby to exhibit the power and majesty of their common rulers.’*

[The religion of the ancient Persians was a mixture of infidelity and idolatry. Although they had neither temples, altars, nor images, they yet worshipped the sun and the celestial luminaries ; and in the course of time they likewise borrowed and incorporated with their own Tsabianism some of the rites and ceremonies of their Chaldean neighbours. Zoroaster, who is supposed ‘to have been an apostate disciple of Ezekiel,’ and whose name was held in the highest veneration amongst his countrymen, taught the doctrine of one

* Rosenmuller, Bib. Cab. of Geog. vol. i. p. 245.

God, and the existence of a good and an evil principle, of which light and darkness were the respective emblems. So early as the day of Pentecost, there were christian converts who introduced the knowledge of the christian faith into Persia.* But never has the gospel obtained any thing like a firm footing in that country, and what with the political fears of individual princes, the superstition of the ancient Guebers, or fire worshippers, and the modern delusion of the false prophet Mahomet, that divine religion has met with greater obstacles to its introduction into Persia than in almost any other quarter of the world.

[*Civil History*.—Elam is the name by which Persia is frequently designated by the sacred writers.† In the patriarchal age it seems to have been an independent kingdom, and was swayed by a powerful prince, Chedorlaomer, who having made many of the Asiatic provinces, as far as ‘Jordan and the vale of Siddim,’ acknowledge his supremacy, imposed an annual tribute, which the petty princes of Sodom and Gomorrah, after submitting to the humiliating impost for twelve years, had formed the resolution of refusing. Their insurrection, together with the speedy chastisement inflicted on them by their haughty master, and the reprisals so suddenly made on him by Abraham in the first battle recorded in authentic history, forms an interesting episode in the book of Genesis. In after ages the inhabitants of Elam were distinguished for their skill in archery, and when annexed to the Chaldean monarchy, as this province was in the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, the Elamites formed a very important part of the forces by which that conqueror accomplished the subjugation of Judah. On the overthrow of the Chaldeo-Babylonian empire, this province fell of course under the power of the Medes, and in the course of the events that brought about the

* Acts ii. 9.

† Gen. xiv. 1; Isaiah xxii. 6; Jer. xlix. 35; Daniel viii. 2.

union of the Medes and Persians, in the person of Cyrus, it was subsequently incorporated with the gigantic kingdom that rose under the name of Persia.

[A horde of nomadic shepherds, whose hardy natures had been nursed amid the mountain solitudes of Taurus, were the original conquerors and possessors of this country, being lured by the prospect of more extensive pastures, to spread themselves over the rich and unoccupied plains of Iran. But whatever were the character and policy of the race that made the early occupation of Persia, little or nothing of importance occurs in its history till the time of Cyrus, who, by conquest, together with inheritances, became in 559 B. C. the founder of the Persian empire, whose wide dominions extended from the Indus in the East to the Mediterranean and the Ægean in the west, while the Black and Caspian Seas, and Caucasus formed its natural limits on the north. To the reader of the sacred history this province is the subject of high interest, both from the circumstance that his name and his conquests, as an appointed instrument in the hands of Providence, had been the theme of the prophetic bards of Israel, long before his appearance on the theatre of public affairs,* and also from the generous and enlightened policy he adopted towards the Jews, whom he permitted, by an edict, issued almost immediately after his successes in Babylon, to return to their native land, and rebuild the city and temple of Jerusalem.† On the death of Cyrus, who was killed in battle with the Messagitæ, a formidable tribe of barbarians on the banks of the Caspian, he was succeeded 530 B. C. by his son Cambyzes, styled Ahasuerus in Scripture,‡ who was almost in every respect a complete contrast to his father, being a prince of a weak understanding, a fickle headstrong temper, a cruel and tyrannical disposition, who by his capricious and wanton barbarities against

* Isaiah xli. 25; xliv. 28; xlv. 1.

† 2 Chron. xxxvi. 23; Ezra i. 2.

‡ Ezra iv. 6.

the members of his family and court, the officers of his army, and the most honourable of his subjects, created universal disgust, insomuch that a conspiracy was formed against him during his absence in Egypt, and the throne seized upon by a person, who supported his pretensions by bearing the name and supposed identity of his brother Smerdis.* On intelligence of this disaffection at home, Cambyzes instantly resolved on returning to Susa, but on his way he was wounded so severely by his sword falling out of the scabbard, that he died, leaving Smerdis in undisputed possession of the kingdom. From a prince of the capricious and wayward character of Cambyzes, little favour could be expected towards the Jews. At the beginning of his reign active attempts were made by the Samaritans to prejudice him against the cause of the restored captives ; and as no decisive measure is recorded to have followed their remonstrances, it is probable that a fit of caprice, or perhaps a feeling of contempt, alone prevented him from the wished-for interference. The opposition of those active enemies of the Jews was renewed with greater vigour on the accession of Smerdis, styled Artaxerxes,† who being naturally solicitous in the circumstances under which he ascended the throne to gratify all influential classes of his subjects, lent a favourable ear to the calumnies of the Samaritans, who described the Jews as engaged in projects of a treasonable nature, and in consequence a peremptory edict was issued, commanding them instantly to stop further proceedings at Jerusalem. After his short reign‡ Darius was elected king 521 B. C., a prince of

* He was one of the Median Magi, and described under various names.—*Editor.*

† Ezra iv. 7.

‡ He was assassinated by seven Persian noblemen, who had discovered his imposture, and out of their number a successor was chosen ; agreement having been made, that the conspirator whose horse first neighed should be declared king. The ingenious artifice by which the groom of Darius secured the honour to his master is well known.—*Editor.*

an active, enterprising, but enlightened and honourable character, who raised the empire of Persia to its highest pitch of glory, although he at the same time sustained severe checks to his career of conquest, especially in his invasion of Greece, where his army of 100,000 men was defeated by 10,000 under Miltiades, on the celebrated field of Marathon. The domestic alliances he formed were specially overruled by Divine Providence to advance the prospects of the Jews. Having married two of Cyrus' daughters, he was, from filial ties, no less than from the respect he otherwise cherished for the memory of his illustrious predecessor, strongly disposed to tread in his footsteps, and an opportunity occurred at an early period of his reign for enlisting these feelings in the cause of the Jews. For when, on the death of Smerdis, Zerubbabel the governor, and Joshua the high priest, with their confederates, encouraged by the prophecies of Zechariah and Haggai, vigorously renewed the works at Jerusalem, and were challenged for their conduct by Tatnai, the Persian satrap, they appealed to the edict of Cyrus, and on that viceroy referring to the king for instructions, Darius ordered search to be made in the archives of the kingdom for the decree of his father-in-law, and on the original copy of that document being found, he forwarded an extract for the satisfaction of his deputy, accompanied by a message to afford every facility for raising Jerusalem from her ashes, and rebuilding the temple on a scale of greater magnificence than before.* To this excellent prince succeeded his son Xerxes, 464 B. C., a prince of whom imbecility of mind, and extreme profligacy of manners, were the leading characteristics. With the projects of his insane ambition and vanity every school-boy is familiarly acquainted; and perhaps in the whole compass of history there is not a more signal monument of the vanity of human pride and glory, than in the pompous preparations he

* Ezra v. and vi.

made for the invasion of Greece,—in the hosts, countless as the sand upon the sea shore, of whom he called himself the master,—and the sudden and humiliating disasters he met with at Plataea and Salamis, from which in terror he recrossed the Hellespont alone in a fishing boat. Xerxes returned to Susa to brood over his defeat, and shutting himself in his palace, gave himself up to sensuality and voluptuousness. It is to this period of Persian history, which followed upon his return from Greece, that the events belong which were so important to the Jews, and are so circumstantially related in the book of Esther.*

[On the death of this king, who was murdered by Artabanus, a Persian noble, he was succeeded by his son Artaxerxes Longimanus, who, whatever was the character of his government in other respects, pursued toward the Jews a policy equally favourable with that of his father and grandfather. Much still remained to be done in order to accomplish the object which the Jewish patriots had at heart. The protracted hostilities which the Persian monarchs had so long carried on, had so drained the resources of their subjects; and Judea particularly, owing to its vicinity to the seat of

* Rosenmuller, Bib. Cab. vol. i. p. 228. The Ahasuerus of Scripture cannot be Darius Hystaspes; nor do we trace the character of the mild and humane Artaxerxes Longimanus in the capricious despot who repudiates his wife, because she will not expose herself to the public gaze in a drunken festival; raises a favourite vizier to the highest honours one day, and hangs him the next; commands the massacre of a whole people, and then allows them, in self-defence, to commit a horrible carnage among his other subjects: yet all this weak and headstrong violence agrees exactly with the character of that Xerxes who commanded the sea to be scourged, because it brought down his bridge over the Hellespont; beheaded the engineers, because their work was swept away by a storm; wantonly, and before the eyes of the father, put to death the sons of his oldest friend Pythias, who had contributed most splendidly to his expedition; shamefully misused the body of the brave Leonidas; and after his defeat, like another Sardanapalus, gave himself up to such voluptuousness, as to issue an edict, offering a reward to the inventor of a new pleasure.—*Rosenmuller, Bib. Cab. vol. i. p. 333.*

—*Editor.*

war, had been called upon to bear so heavy a share of the burden, both in the shape of pecuniary supplies and quarters for the soldiers, that the measures contemplated for the full restoration of the civil and ecclesiastical constitution of the Jews, were still very far from being accomplished. The completion of the temple, so far from satisfying the wishes of that people, tended only to sharpen the edge of their pious patriotism, and to make them long more ardently, the nearer they approached the consummation of their prayers, to feast their eyes and refresh their hearts with the smoke of the daily oblations. As yet, however, the altars were empty, the courts untrodden, the choristers silent; every thing was in an imperfect and unsettled state, except the splendid fabric of the temple, when, in the seventh year of this monarch's reign, Ezra, a man eminently qualified for the task, was invested with ample powers 'to set magistrates and judges,' to provide for the due administration of the laws, and to punish offenders, according to the extent of their criminality, with death, banishment, confiscation of goods, or imprisonment. Under his auspices, too, a collection was made among all the Jewish residents in Babylon, for the commencement of the temple service; and while the king and his nobles contributed liberally out of their own privy purse, instructions were issued to all the treasurers beyond the river Euphrates, to furnish a certain amount of supplies in silver, wheat, oil, wine, and all the salt that might be requisite for the sacred offices. Notwithstanding all this liberality, however, and the additional encouragement held out to persons of the sacred profession to repair to Jerusalem, only two families of Levites could be prevailed upon to join the caravan of emigrants to the land of their fathers; so that, in spite of the indefatigable efforts of Ezra, Jerusalem continued long in a forsaken and ruinous state, until Nehemiah, who was promoted to the honourable situation of cup-bearer to Artaxerxes, and

who had long sighed with pious regret over the low condition of the city and sepulchre of his fathers, used his influence with the king to get the necessary measures put in operation for reviving their long-faded glory. His appeal was successful. Nehemiah himself was appointed commissioner, along with Ezra ; and to him belongs the chief merit of calling again into existence, after a dreary interregnum, the civil and ecclesiastical constitution of the Jews.

[After this period, the civil history of Persia appears scarcely if at all mixed up with the affairs of the Jews, except on one occasion, when, in revenge for the murder of the high priest, to whom the Persian commander had shown favour, and whom he had promoted over the head of his elder brother, a fine of fifty drachms was exacted from every animal offered in sacrifice during the seven years of his provincial residence. But that was the deed of an inferior officer, not of the government ; and thenceforward the Jews seem to have enjoyed the peaceful occupation of their own country, until the Persian empire fell before the arms of Alexander.

[MEDIA.

[A country so called in ancient times, of considerable extent in territory, and once important in political influence, was situated on the south and west of the Caspian, being bounded by the Araxes on the north, by Persia on the south, by Parthia and Hyrcania on the east, and by Assyria on the west. It is comprehended in the modern provinces of Irak-adjemi, or Great Media, Masanderan, Ghilan, Azerbaijan, and Shirwan.*

[*Physical geography.*—It is a country of a very diversified character. In some places the soil is rich, well watered, and fertile ; in others, the face of nature pre-

* Rosenmuller, *Cab. of Bib. Geog.*

sents nothing but an interminable range of naked rocks and plains of sand. The high mountain-chain of Taurus forms a natural division of the country, not only into north and south, but also into rich and poor, barren and productive. North of these lofty mountains, the soil is exceedingly good, and smiles with a variety of natural productions ; on the south, the region is cold, bleak, and sterile. The words of a late traveller are descriptive of its ancient as well as present condition. ' What lies in deserts far exceeds in extent what it can boast of land of better character ; and even of what arable land there is, not one twentieth part is cultivated.'

[Its principal town was Ecbatana, called in Scripture Acmetha, and supposed to have stood on the site occupied by the modern Hamadan. It was a very ancient city, built not long after Babylon, and beautified and greatly enlarged by Semiramis, who showed her attachment to the place by an elaborate work,—the construction of water-courses for its use, made by digging a passage through mount Orontes. In beauty and magnificence, and almost in extent, it was the rival of Babylon and Nineveh ; and, indeed, an idea of the size of the place may be formed from the circumstance that it is said to have covered a space of ground about twenty-four British miles in compass. What contributed greatly both to the beauty and importance of this city, was its being chosen as the favourite summer residence of the kings of Persia, who built a palace in its immediate neighbourhood, distinguished for its splendour and magnificence, and of which, according to Josephus, the prophet Daniel, by the direction of Darius, contrived the plan, and actively superintended the erection. In the days of Ezra, the royal archives of Persia were found in the palace of this city.* There were many other cities in this ancient country mentioned in history, but as none of them oc-

* Ezra vi. 2.

cur in Scripture, it does not fall within our province to notice or describe them.

[The Medes were remarkable, generally, for their bravery and skill in war;* and, in particular, for their expertness in archery and horsemanship.† It was, moreover, a marked feature in the character of this people, that, probably owing to their rudeness and want of civilization, they knew nothing of the value of money,‡ a feature which continued long to be one of their boasted characteristics, for Xenophon alludes to the same fact. The warlike disposition and habits of the Medes were predicted and employed as instruments in the hand of Divine Providence for accomplishing the doom of Babylon.§

[Of the history of Media, little or nothing beyond fabulous traditions, is known prior to its subjugation by Tiglathpileser, and its consequent annexation to the Assyrian Empire. The sudden and total annihilation of Sennacherib's army during his invasion of Judea was the signal for the Medes throwing off the yoke of their Assyrian masters. A republic for a time was established in Media, till monarchy was again restored by Arphaxad, a brave and enterprising prince, who, by his prudence and conciliatory measures, united the independent states of Media into one strong kingdom, surrounded Ecbatana with fortifications, and framed a code of laws for his subjects. He was succeeded by his son Phraortes, and his son Cyaxares, the latter of whom formed a confederacy with Nebuchadnezzar, which issued in the overthrow of the ancient kingdom of Assyria. Astyages, styled Ahasuerus in scripture, was the next king on the throne of Media, who, after having reigned thirty-five years, left that kingdom to Cyaxares II., better known by the name of Darius the Mede, 560 B. C., an event which subsequently led to its union with Persia, in whose history from that time it is swallowed up.

* Jer. li. 11, 28. † Jer. l. 42. ‡ Isa. xlii. 17. § Isa. xxi. 2.

[EGYPT.*

[Egypt, an ancient and very famous country of Africa, derives its chief importance and interest in connexion with sacred history, from its being employed by Divine Providence as the cradle of his chosen people,—in which they were to reside till they amounted to numbers sufficient to prepare them for the future occupation of the land of promise. This celebrated land is situated between $23^{\circ} 40'$ and $31^{\circ} 28'$ north latitude, and between 30° and $24^{\circ} 36'$ east longitude. Its length may be estimated about 530 miles, and its greatest breadth, from Pelusium to Alexandria, about 250. Egypt, the most common name by which it has ever been known, is supposed to signify the land of Copts, or the black country, from the extremely dark colour both of the soil and the water. In Scripture it is sometimes designated the land of Ham, and more frequently the land of Mizraim, the son of Ham.† Its boundaries are,—on the north, the Mediterranean; on the east, the Red Sea and the Isthmus of Suez; on the south, the ancient Ethiopia; and on the west Libya.

[*Physical Geography*.—The superficial extent of territory, comprehended under the name Egypt, affords no index of the natural value and resources of the country, as the productive part of it is confined almost wholly to the Delta in the lower, and the valley washed by the Nile in the upper, districts. These parts, however, which are the chief, indeed the only seats of Egyptian

* The Egypt of Europeans, the *αἰα-γυπτος* of the Greeks, is supposed to be a contraction for *Aia-gyptos*, the land of *Kyptos*, or *αἰα-γυψος*, the black land, either of which doubtlessly exhibits the rudiments of Copt.—*Duff's Notes*.—*Editor*.

† In the Scriptures this name is often used in the singular, *Misr*, and it is not a little remarkable that the name which the native Arabs familiarly give to their country is *Misr*, and the Copts *Chamia*.—*Editor*.

agriculture, are almost sufficient to compensate for the wide spread sterility of the rest, being distinguished for the great depth of the alluvial soil, which often reaches to twenty-five or thirty feet, and is black, rich, and soft as butter.* This fat loam, from the capabilities of which so much may be expected, is not indebted for its annual produce to the influences of a propitious climate, for the atmosphere is remarkably dry; and although the common report that rain never falls in Egypt is far from being correct,† and there is there, as in all warm countries, copious dew by night; yet the natural moisture supplied in this way, is scanty and inconsiderable, and Egypt would be entirely destitute of agriculture, were it not for the singular remedy which a wise and kind Providence has afforded in the periodical inundations of the Nile.‡

[This river, which rises in Abyssinia, runs from south

* The soil seems an almost impalpable powder, through which the traveller has to wade his way.—*Robinson's Researches*, vol. i. p. 28.—*Editor*.

† 'Showers,' says Wilkinson, 'fall annually at Thebes; perhaps on an average four or five in a year; and every eight or ten years, heavy torrents fill the torrent-beds of the mountains, which run to the banks of the Nile.'—*Thebes*, p. 75. 'The changes of the weather, says St John, speaking of Upper Egypt, 'are frequent and violent. In the morning of this day, for example, Dec. 19, it was mild and balmy, like spring; in the afternoon, a keen cold wind spread over the river, which made the extremities tingle as in sharp frosty weather. When the sun was out, it was in fact summer; if a cloud covered him, the rigours of winter were felt; up to this period we every day had clouds at intervals, generally rain. Indeed, nothing can be more inaccurate than the opinion that it does not rain in this part of Egypt. During the first week we were on the Nile, it rained at least ten times, not slightly or sparingly, as if the elements were not used to it, but in long, heavy, drenching showers, which thoroughly soaked the earth, and must have been greatly useful in forwarding the processes of vegetation.'—*St John's Egypt*, vol. i. p. 221: see also *Robinson's Researches*, vol. i. p. 33.—*Editor*.

‡ The name Nile in Arabic signifies dark blue or black; and all agree that it has been significantly applied to the great river of Egypt, on account of the singularly black slime which it so copiously deposits. And this at once reminds us of the Scriptural appellation of the river Sihor or Sichor, an appellation the meaning of which is black. Jeremiah ii. 8.—*Duff's Notes*.—*Editor*.

to north, and has a course of 2000 miles, during the greater part of which it is augmented by no tributary. The copiousness of its waters is less than might be expected in the latter part of that course, owing to the parched and sandy regions through which it passes. Anciently, it could boast of a great number of canals, lakes, and tributary branches, connected with it and fed by it, and it poured its waters in majestic swell into the Delta by seven mouths, four of which were natural, while the other two were artificial. But of those mouths, the two latter only remain, the former having entirely disappeared, being either dried up, or turned into stagnant lakes,—a striking accomplishment of the prophecy, ‘I will make the rivers of Egypt dry.’

[The deliciousness of the Nile water has been long celebrated. The natives are reported to be so fond of it, that they prefer a draught of that pure element to libations of more generous liquid, and sometimes eat salt to stimulate thirst, that they may enjoy it; they sigh for it when absent more than for any other natural pleasure associated with recollections of home; and the daughters of the Ptolemies when married to foreign princes in the neighbouring countries, are said to have hired carriers at a vast expense to bring them bottles of their favourite beverage, which they prized above the greatest luxuries. The water of this river still enjoys its ancient reputation of being uncommonly sweet and agreeable to the palate, calling forth the praises of Europeans no less than of the more prejudiced natives, although the too free indulgence at first often subjects strangers to a slight attack of dysentery. What is a remarkable feature in water so highly extolled, is that, when taken from the river, it has a turbid appearance, the removal of which, however, is effected by means which daily use has made familiar to the inhabitants—by either filtering it through the porous jars of the country, or keeping it some time in common jars, the insides of which have been previously rubbed with almond paste. ‘If I should live

500 years,' says Dr Richardson, 'I will never forget the eagerness with which the crew let down and pulled up the pitcher, and swigged of its contents, whistling and smacking their lips, calling "good, good," as if bidding defiance to the whole world to produce such another draught.' From a knowledge of the extraordinary fondness and veneration the Egyptians cherished for their national river,—a sentiment which, in the breasts of their ancestors, existed even to greater intensity, one may easily form some idea of the magnitude of the calamity to which they were subjected when its waters were turned into blood, and all the fish in the river, which were esteemed one of the greatest delicacies at their tables, stank.

[The Nile is the great benefactor of this country, as it annually overflows, in consequence of which, and the careful industry of the natives, who wait with the utmost anxiety for the return of the season, and lead the refreshing waters by artificial sluices over the parts which the rising stream does not reach, the whole land enjoys the advantage of regular irrigation. The time of this periodical inundation extends from the 19th of June to the middle or end of October, the rise or fall being earlier or later by fifteen days, or sometimes even a month. The cause of the phenomenon is thus assigned by Mr Bruce, the Abyssinian traveller:— 'The air is so much rarified by the sun during the time he remains almost stationary over the tropic of Capricorn, that the winds, loaded with vapours, rush in upon the land from the Atlantic ocean on the west, the Indian ocean on the east, and the cold Southern ocean beyond the Cape. Thus, a great quantity of vapour is gathered, as it were, into a focus; and as the same causes continue to operate during the progress of the sun northward, a vast train of clouds proceeds from south to north, which are sometimes extended much farther than at other times. In April, all the rivers in the south of Abyssinia begin to swell; in the begin-

ing of June, they are full, and continue so while the sun remains stationary in the tropic of Cancer. This excessive rain, which would sweep off the whole soil of Egypt into the sea, were it to continue without intermission, begins to abate as the sun turns southward, and on his arrival at the zenith of each place, on his passage towards that quarter, it ceases entirely. Immediately after the sun has passed the line, then begins the rainy season to the southward. The rise of the Nile at Cairo does not commence till June. The red appearances occasioned by the arrival of the Abyssinian waters takes place early in July, from which the rise of the river may properly be dated, as it then begins to increase rapidly. By the middle of August it reaches half its greatest height, and is at its maximum towards the end of September. From the 24th of that month the waters are supposed to decline, but maintain nearly the same level till the middle of October. By the 10th of November they have sunk about half, and from that period continue to subside very slowly, till they reach their minimum in April. The regularity with which these phenomena occur will appear the more remarkable when taken in connexion with all the circumstances which distinguish this wonderful stream.' Not only, however, is the periodical overflow of the Nile a matter of the utmost importance to the natives of Egypt, but their experience has taught them to judge of the exact height to which the rise of the waters is absolutely necessary for the demands of the country. 'A few feet less than the ordinary height,' says an accurate writer, 'would prevent the spreading of the waters to a sufficient distance; a few feet more would prevent the water from draining off in the proper season for sowing, and spread devastation throughout the country, as happened in the years 1818 and 1829, and in either case a famine, or perhaps an extensive destruction of life and property would be the result.'*

* Hence it appears, that a medium rise is essential everywhere;

[The houses are protected from the effects of the flood* by being situated, where a rocky foundation cannot be obtained, on artificial mounds, raised sufficiently high to place them beyond its reach. This has been the practice universally from time immemorial, although it is said that it is not now in some parts of the country so indispensable, the water not overspreading the land nearly to the same extent, at least in the Delta, that it seems to have done in ancient times.† Whatever truth there may be in this opinion, the periodical inundation of this national river is the natural source from which Egypt derives its extraordinary fertility; the earth, which for months previously has been parched, rent with cracks, and exhausted, through the severe and long-continued drought, being then impregnated with a new principle of vegetative energy, so that the seed, which is scattered on the soft mud, ere the waters have wholly subsided, and afterwards trodden down by cattle, grows to maturity, and yields a luxuriant harvest, without requiring much of the labour or assistance of the husbandman.]

[The diffusion of the water over the flat surface of the country is effected by various means,—from the simple opening of a sluice with the foot, or emptying the contents of a leathern bucket, to the more laborious operations of the water-wheels, called Sâkieh, the construction of which is so singular, that we are sure our readers will be gratified by the following description of it:—‘A

but the wisdom of Providence is conspicuous in making the rise greater or less, in different parts of the country, according to the quantity of rain that usually falls.—*Editor*.

* To this overflow of the Nile the prophet Jeremiah alludes, when he says, ‘Egypt riseth like a flood, and his waters are moved like the rivers, xlv. 8.—*Editor*.

† The same protection, however, cannot be extended to the fields. The inundation often breaks down and effaces almost all the landmarks, which renders the measuring-line necessary after the subsidence of the waters. To this there is an allusion in the words of Isaiah:—‘A nation meted and trodden down’ (smoothed, levelled), ‘whose land the rivers have spoiled;’ xix. 2.—*Editor*.

deep well is sunk close by the river's bank. By means of a narrow connecting channel, deepened in proportion as the river subsides, the well is constantly replenished. Above the surface-well or fountain is a vertical wheel, around which is made to revolve a series of from twenty to sixty earthen jars or pitchers, with narrow necks. These, bound to two parallel ropes, as the wheels roll round, are made to descend with their open mouths towards the surface of the water. Therein they dip or plunge, and when filled, ascend with their aqueous burden on the other side. On passing their zenith altitude, so to speak, they are again turned upside down, and discharge their contents into a large wooden trough or cistern, which, communicating with the main trunk of the small irrigating canals, maintain an uninterrupted supply through a thousand wide-spreading branches.*

[The extraordinary productiveness of modern Egypt,

* It is from this purely Egyptian process, with which he became acquainted through his family alliance with Pharaoh, and which he probably introduced into his own country, that the royal preacher, under different emblems, so graphically portrays the dissolution of our earthly tabernacle, when, as with his eyes fixed on this piece of rude but important machinery now described, he speaks of the pitcher broken at the fountain, and of the wheel broken at the cistern! In the process of irrigation in a country like Egypt, suppose the pitcher and the wheel to be literally broken at the cistern and fountain, what must follow? In many places, it was our lot actually to witness a broken 'wheel and pitcher,'—broken and deserted through neglect or oppression. What was the visible effect? Deprived of its moisture, and, consequently, of its vegetative powers, the land became an easy prey to the loose drifting sands of the desert. All annual and biennial products had disappeared. The spaces between the irrigating furrows were completely filled. While even the more sturdy perennials, such as the sycamore, half-buried in wreaths or knolls of sand, began to exhibit a withered and drooping aspect. What a striking picture of the melancholy aspect of the human frame! once mantled over with the verdure of youth and the increasing fruitfulness of riper years,—when the fountain of the heart, with its cistern and wheel and pitcher, its ventricles, tubes, veins, and arteries for the reception, propulsion, and distribution of that blood which is the life of man,—when all, all emptied and broken, cease to discharge their life-sustaining functions! How happy, beyond all previous conception, did the graphic imagery of the sacred pen-

notwithstanding the many disadvantages that exist, unfavourable to the cultivation of agriculture on an extensive scale, has called forth the admiration of all travellers who have been either in the Delta or the Thebais.* It is, in the present day, the country from which the population of Constantinople, and many other cities of the Turkish empire, derive their corn. It was, under the emperors, the granary of the ancient Romans; and we need not wonder, therefore, when we are told, that, during the calamitous famine that oppressed the countries of the Levant in the early times of Jacob, Egypt was the quarter to which all eyes were directed for relief.† For the variety and excel-

man appear amidst the broken wheels and broken pitchers which occasionally exhibited to the eye such deathlike desolation even on the banks of the Nile.—*Duff's Notes.—Editor.*

* As one proof out of many, it may be mentioned, that a species of Indian corn, which forms a chief ingredient in the food of the native Arabs, never produces less than 3000 grains on one ear.—*Hamilton's Travels.—Editor.*

† 'Our path,' says St John, in speaking of the Thebais or Upper Egypt, 'lay over one of the richest and most highly-cultivated plains I ever saw, covered with luxuriant crops of clover, lentils, lupines, onions, sugar-cane, wheat, and about two thousand acres of beans in blossom. On all sides, as far as the eye could reach, arose the date-groves, in which the villages stood embosomed; sheep, goats, horses, buffaloes, &c., were feeding in numerous groups among the rich pasturage, which, having been drenched by the dews of the preceding night, every leaf and blade now glittered with sparkling dew-drops. Scarcely could paradise itself be more delightful than the land now before us: the whole atmosphere being perfumed faintly, but deliciously by the scent of many flowers, while every object which presented itself to the eye was clothed with immutable freshness and beauty. I could now comprehend why the Romans sent their consumptive patients, and the Turks their men grown prematurely old by excess, to the banks of the Nile; for nowhere on earth could they in winter find a more congenial climate than that of the Thebais.'—*Egypt and Mehemet Ali*, vol. i. p. 288. 'No flat region,' says Dr Duff, speaking of Lower Egypt, 'can be more beautiful. The waters of the annual inundation had not wholly withdrawn from the land, but half subsided on the channel of the river. Vast level plains spread out on all sides, having their carefully-cultivated soil clad in the living green which distinguishes the first fresh blades of vegetation in the month of May in the British climes; and their borders fringed with rows, and their points

lence of its vegetable productions, this country is not less eminent; and the extensive fields that are annually covered with cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic, show the taste of the natives to be unchanged since the days of the Israelites.

[*Political Divisions.*—In ancient times, Egypt was divided into a great number of cantons, called Nomi, which took their particular designation from the chief town of each; such as nomus Memphitis, nomus Pathyritis. The ancient division, however, most frequently alluded to by the sacred writers, is into Egypt, meaning the northern part of the country, and Pathros the southern. Thus, Isaiah says:—‘In that day the Lord shall set his hand to recover the remnant of his people from Egypt and from Pathros.’* ‘The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the Jews which dwell in the land of Egypt, and in the country of Pathros.’† And to the same effect Ezekiel says:—‘I will bring again the captivity of Egypt, and I will cause them to return into the land of Pathros.’‡

[The division of the country, however, that is best known, and most commonly adopted, is, into three different portions, distinguished by the peculiar natural features of the country, the first of which is Upper Egypt, or Thebais, which forms the most southerly portion, and is by the sacred writers termed Pathros. The capital of this division was Thebes, which is considered on good grounds to be the No-Ammon of the prophets, and is called in the Septuagint Diospolis, *i. e.* the city

of junction garnished with clumps and groves of date-trees, palmyras, sycamores, and other evergreens. Thus, for miles together, it presented the aspect of a well-dressed garden. The numberless branches and canals for distributing the redundant waters of the river, and the many pieces of mechanism in busy play to supply the deficiencies or perpetuate the effects of the inundation, were conspicuous objects in the landscape.’—*Notes on Egypt.*—*Editor.*

* Isaiah xi. 11. [Pathros is thought to be the Phaturites of Pliny.]
—*Editor.*

† Jer. xlv. 1.

‡ Ezek. xxix. 14.

of Jupiter-Ammon, who, as Bochart thinks, was Ham, the founder of the Egyptian settlement. This conjecture is founded on the epithet Ammon,* the real meaning of which this learned writer referred to affirms to be 'the Ammon or god of No.' But, as the word 'gods' is introduced with peculiar emphasis in another clause of the same verse, it seems an ungraceful and unmeaning tautology of which the sacred writer would not be guilty, to specify the idol of one city of Egypt in a passage which predicts the universal doom of the Egyptian deities; and, besides, the rendering our translators have preferred, the multitude of No, or the populous No, is too well supported by the historical character of the place to which this Scripture appellation is thought to point, to be set aside on such slight grounds as a purely conjectural interpretation of a word. The analogous epithet applied to it by Homer of Hecatompylos, the city of a hundred gates, although probably a poetical hyperbole, affords a most satisfactory comment on the language of the prophet. In the palmy days of its prosperity and splendour, its mighty population extended on both sides of the Nile as far as the mountains; and, it is said, when occasion required, it would send to the field 20,000 men capable of bearing arms, besides 200 war chariots. Its glory, however, which had attained its zenith in the contemporary reigns of David and Solomon, was afterwards subject to several periods of disastrous eclipse. It was captured and almost wholly destroyed by the Assyrians under Tartan, general of Sennacherib,† 750 B. C. It was sacked a second time by the Persian king Cambyses, 525 B. C.‡ A third time, it rose like a phoenix from its ashes in greater splendour than ever, and was finally reduced to a heap of ruins, 81 B. C. Of the magnitude and splendour of this city, which once held the proud pre-eminence of being the mistress of the world, and

* Jeremiah xli. 25.

† Nahum iii. 8-10; Isaiah xx. 1.

‡ Ezekiel xxx. 15, 16.

which, perhaps, has never been surpassed, an idea may be formed by the architectural remains, the temples of Luxor and Carnac, the two colossal statues of Memnon (Amenoph or Sesostris),* the mummy pits, which are dug thirty feet in the solid rock, the avenues of sphinxes, and the inexhaustible profusion of sculptures and hieroglyphics which appear on the walls.

[Pathros, another ancient city of the Thebaid, is situated, according to Ptolemy, within a short distance of Thebes. It was to this place that the rebellious Jews under Johanan, the son of Kareah, betook themselves, and from their residence in which they became so deeply enamoured of Egyptian idolatry, as to draw down upon their guilty heads the righteous vengeance of heaven, which overtook them through the exterminating swords of Nebuchadnezzar and Cambyses.† Pathros is now completely ‘desolate.’]

[Syene was the southern boundary of Egypt, the key of that country on the side of ancient Ethiopia, and hence this fortified city is graphically alluded to by the prophet Ezekiel,‡ when predicting the desolation which the Lord purposed to bring upon the whole land. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, ‘behold I will make the land of Egypt utterly waste and desolate, from the tower of Syene even unto the border of Ethiopia.’ The words, ‘from the tower of Syene,’ as has been already observed in an earlier part of this volume, should be rendered,

* Although nothing of the principal statue is visible but what is above the chin, the rest being buried in rubbish, that fragment measures twenty-two feet in height. ‘Long,’ says Lord Lindsay: ‘did we gaze on the scene around and below us (the ruins of Thebes): what utter desolation! Truly, indeed, has No been “rent asunder.” I spent some delightful moments in running over the scene of ruins scattered around me, so visibly smitten by the hand of God in fulfilment of the prophecies that describe No Ammon as the scene of desolation I then beheld her. The hand of the true Jupiter Ammon, the God of truth, has indeed “executed judgments on all the gods of Egypt,” but especially on his spurious representative, the idol of this most stupendous of earthly temples. Silence reigns in its courts.—*Travels*, vol. i. p. 185.—*Editor*.

† Isaiah xi. 11; Jeremiah xlv. 1; Ezek. xxix. 14 ‡ Ezek. xxix. 10.

‘from Migdol to Syene.’ Syene, now Essuan, lying at the southern extremity of Egypt, on the confines of Cush, near the tropic of Cancer, lat. 24° N., long. 32° , which is the remotest point in the north.*

[The second great natural division of this country is Middle Egypt, called anciently Heptanomis, from the seven inferior cantons contained in it, and it includes that extensive territory which lies on both sides of the Nile between the Thebaid and the Delta. Its capital was Memphis, once mentioned by this name in the Scriptures,† but more frequently spoken of under the designation of Noph.‡ Its site was just at that point of the Delta where the Nile separates into a variety of streams, and nearly opposite to the modern Cairo. It was the capital of ancient Egypt, the residence of the court of the Pharaohs, and, consequently, the memorable scene of Joseph’s varying fortunes, and the chief seat of Egyptian literature and worship; for, besides the college of the Magi, it boasted of a stupendous temple to the honour of Apis, the most splendid erection in Egypt, and the spot in whose neighbourhood the far-famed pyramids reared their giant heads. It sustained a terrible blow, first from the Chaldeans under Nebuchadnezzar, and afterwards from the Persians under Cambyses, who respectively accomplished the divine threatenings denounced by Jeremiah and Ezekiel.§ At a subsequent period it was rebuilt, on a larger scale, and beautifully embellished by the Ptolemies, and so much was it favoured with the patronage

* What our version translates ‘Sin shall have great pain,’ Ezekiel xxx. 16, the Septuagint renders *Ταραχή ταραχθήσεται Συήνη*. It is probable that this is the original text, Syene, and not Sin, which was mentioned in the preceding verse, and then the sense of the passage will be ‘Syene (which was situated immediately below the cataracts), although accustomed to a hoarse resounding noise, shall be alarmed by an unwonted and far louder noise,—the din and convulsion of war,—which will drown the roar of the waterfalls.’—*Editor*.

† Hosea ix. 6.

‡ Isaiah xix. 13.

§ Jeremiah xliii. 8, 13; Ezekiel xxx. 13, 16.

of that royal dynasty, that at the beginning of the christian era, it was, next to Alexandria, the most important and powerful city in Egypt. During all the many revolutions which that country underwent, it continued to flourish in great prosperity and splendour till 640, when it was overthrown by the Saracens, and in its stead the modern city of Cairo rose on the opposite bank of the river.

[Of this ancient metropolis of Egypt scarce a vestige now remains to mark the site.* From the wealth and luxury that were poured into it, the dynasty of the Pharaohs flourished therein unrivalled pride and glory. Superstition reigned there as its head quarters; and while other cities of inferior note had only local divinities and particular rites, every object of worship, and every species of superstition were patronized within the walls of the capital, and its population, maintained by a constant influx of strangers from all parts of the country, imported severally their own tutelary deities, which amounted to such number and variety, that no place could exceed Memphis in its offensiveness to the eye of Him who is jealous of his honour. In the present wide spread desolation to which it is consigned, we read the awful fulfilment of the divine threatening 'I will execute judgments in Noph.'

[Lower Egypt comprises the whole of that triangular region known by the name of the Delta, and extending from Cairo to the Mediterranean, together with Mareotis and Alexandria to the west, Cariotis and Augustamia, and the districts bordering on Arabia to the west. This division in ancient times was thickly

* Dr Robinson says, that two large mounds of rubbish, a colossal statue, sunk deep in the ground, and a few fragments of red granite, are all that the eye can discover.—*Bib. Resear.* vol. i. p. 40. 'We rode for miles,' says Lord Lindsay, 'through groves of palms and acacias, cultivated fields, and wastes of sand, over what we knew must be the site of Memphis, but Noph is indeed waste and desolate.'—*Travels*, vol. i. p. 189—*Editor*.

studded with towns, among which the most important mentioned in Scripture were the following :—

[Sin, called by the Greeks Pelusium, now Tineh, was situated at the north-eastern extremity, near the lake Menzala, and on a small tributary of the Pelusian branch of the Nile. In consequence of its situation, about ninety-six miles from the Mediterranean, and 130 from Jerusalem, it was the key of the country on the side of Palestine, and as it was a well fortified place, and occupied generally with a strong garrison for the better security, it is termed by the prophet ‘the strength of Egypt.’* In common with the other chief towns of Egypt, it has shared in the great disasters that have overtaken this fallen country, and from its ruins the modern Damietta has sprung.

[Phibeseth, supposed to be the Bubastis of the Greeks, now Tel Basta, was also situated a little south of Pelusium, on the Pelusiatic branch of the Nile. It had a magnificent temple, dedicated to the goddess Besheth, the Diana Agrestis of the Greeks and Romans.

[On, or Aven, stood a little to the west of Bubastis, from which it is separated by the Sebennetic branch of the Nile, while the Pelusiatic divided it from Arabia. Its original name was Ain Shems, or Shemesh, ‘the fountain of the sun,’ and afterwards Beth-shemesh,† or Heliopolis, the city of the sun, from the splendid temple which was erected in this city to the luminary of day. It is celebrated in sacred history as the residence of Joseph’s father-in-law, who was a priest or prince of this place.‡ It is celebrated also for being the chief residence of the wise men of Egypt, and especially for its college of priests, whither Herodotus, Plato, and others repaired to investigate the science and institutions of Egypt. It sustained a dreadful blow from the invasion of Nebuchadnezzar, and at a

* Ezekiel xxx. 15, 17.

† Jeremiah xlii. 13.

‡ Genesis xli. 45.

period subsequent to this it was so dreadfully ravaged by the troops of Cambyses, the Persian, that from that date it continued rapidly to decline and fall. Ezekiel in his denunciation of the divine vengeance upon the land of Egypt, describes this city and its neighbour Bubastis as partners in the common calamity. The names of this city, Bethaven as well as Heliopolis, sufficiently indicate the idolatrous worship for which it was famous.* 'Its site is still marked,' says Dr Robinson, 'by low mounds, inclosing a space about three quarters of a mile in length, by half a mile in breadth, which was once occupied, partly by houses, and partly by the celebrated temple of the sun. This area is now a ploughed field, and the solitary obelisk of red granite,† covered with hieroglyphics, which still rises in the midst, is the sole remnant of the ancient worshippers of that luminary.‡

[Taphanes, or Taphne, was situated about sixteen miles south from Pelusium, from its vicinity to which flourishing seaport it was called by Herodotus Daphnæ Pelusiacæ, and on the margin of the large lake Menzala, which afforded considerable facilities for traffic, with the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. In this city stood one of the palaces of the Pharaohs.§ It was the first Egyptian town on crossing the border from Palestine, in which the fugitives under Johanan the son of Kareah obtained a convenient accommodation, and it was here also that those unprincipled apostates, finding it impossible by all their threats to gain

* Bethaven signifies the temple of light; Bethoron the temple of the fountain of light; Bethshan and Bethshemesh the temple of the sun. They are names somewhat varying, but conveying the idea, that the same worship prevailed in these different places.—*Editor*.

† The rosso antico, the ancient red marble of Upper Egypt, of which the monuments and statues of that country were made.—*Ed*.

‡ Bib. Resear. vol. I. p. 36. On the right hand of the road, leading into it, stands a venerable sycamore, under whose shade immemorial tradition reports that Joseph and his wife rested with their precious charge during their flight into Egypt.—*Editor*.

§ Jeremiah xliii. 9.

over Jeremiah to their side, are said by a very ancient tradition to have stoned that faithful prophet to death. This place was soon after besieged by Nebuchadnezzar, against whose vigorous assaults its inhabitants, being unable to hold out, surrendered and passed under the yoke of that mighty conqueror.*

[Zoan, the Tanis of the Greeks, the Zaan† of the Arabs, was situated on one of the eastern branches of the Nile, called by its own name, near the lake Menzala, about forty-four miles west of Pelusium, 169 east from Alexandria, and three from the shores of the Mediterranean. It was a place that could boast of a higher antiquity than perhaps any other city in Egypt.‡ It was one of the royal residences of the Pharaohs, as appears from many of the miracles of Moses being wrought there in the royal presence, and continued to enjoy that distinction down to the times of Isaiah and Ezekiel.§ Zaan is a small fishing village in the neighbourhood of the ruins of this ancient place of renown, all of which, with a few fragments of obelisks, are nearly invisible from the mounds of rubbish in which they are buried. But among those that are open to observation, many large blocks present a vitrified appearance, thus affording clear and strong evidence that 'the Lord hath set fire in Zoan.'||

[Alexandria, originally built on a small island, Pharos, which is now joined to the main land, is situated in the Mediterranean, and from its position always must command the trade both of the east and west.

* Isaiah xxx. 4; Jeremiah xliii. 7; xliv. 1. Some commentators suppose the Hanes mentioned by Isaiah, xxx. 4, to be the same as Taphanea. But the eminent biblical scholar Forster, quoted in Michaelis Spicileg. Geog. Heb. has given satisfactory proofs that another city is intended, Thennesum, situated on the Mendesian lake.—*Editor*.

† Zaan means flat, level, plain; and seems to be descriptive of its situation in the low grounds of the Delta.—*Editor*.

‡ Num. xiii. 22.

§ Psalm lxxviii. 12; Isaiah xix. 11; xxx. 4; Ezekiel xxx. 14.

|| Ezekiel xxx. 14.

It was founded 333 B. C., by Alexander the Great, from whom it derives its name, and is celebrated on a variety of grounds,—having been the royal residence of the Ptolemies, the seat of an archiepiscopal see, and the centre of a flourishing church in the early ages of christianity, as well as for the Greek translation of the Old Testament Scriptures; for its famous library, containing 700,000 volumes, its watch-tower, and the noble temples and monuments with which the princes of the Ptolemean dynasty successively embellished it. One single square of the ancient city covered a larger space of ground than what is occupied by the present town, which is a mere shadow of departed greatness; and no where is there a more melancholy spectacle to be seen than that of the modern Alexandria, containing a few narrow ill built streets, in the midst of what looks like an immense cemetery spread in the surrounding country, strewn with remains of old walls, broken pilasters, obelisks and monuments of ancient architecture, on a style of art that cannot be surpassed. But to describe the past and present condition of Alexandria, its revolutions and bearing upon the politics of the ancient and modern world, is entirely foreign to our purpose; and we close this notice by observing that the only circumstance which gives it an interest in the eyes of the reader of the Bible is its having furnished the merchant ship in which Paul embarked for Rome.

[Migdol, the Magdolus of the Greeks and Romans, stood on the border of Egypt, on entering that country from Palestine, and was about twelve miles distant from Pelusium, and not far from the western shore of the Red Sea. It was the most northerly part of Egypt, as Syene was the southern extremity, and it is one of the cities to which the rebellious Jews went, who violently carried the prophet Jeremiah along with them contrary to the command of God.

[Others place the land of Goshen a little farther south.

Jablonsky in the Fayum, the district immediately bordering on Suez,* while Dr Adam Clarke, Pococke, Sicard, Norden, St John, consider it as situated on the Wady Toumilat, in which the Cairo canal terminates. 'There can be little doubt,' says the intelligent author of the *Modern Traveller*, 'that in this part of the modern province of Calyubiyeh, the land of Goshen was situated; while Matarriyeh, about six miles to the N. E. of Memphis, near a spring of excellent water, which still bears the name of Ain Shems (fountain of the Sun), marks the site of the ancient metropolis of Lower Egypt' (Heliopolis). All writers, however, which ever of these different hypotheses they espouse, agree in maintaining that this chosen residence of the Israelites lay on the Arabian side of the Nile, and that all the transactions which Scripture records occurred in Lower Egypt, or the district immediately bordering on it.

[Rameses and Pithom, two other cities mentioned in Scripture, belonged to that part of Egypt which was distinguished by the name of Goshen. This district, to which a peculiar interest is attached from its being the territory assigned by Joseph to his brethren,† lay on the east of the Delta, being bounded on the west by the Pelusaic branch of the Nile; on the east by the desert that borders the Red Sea; on the north by Palestine, to which it was the nearest of any part of Egypt;‡ and to the south the boundary was not very defined. It is included in the modern division, Esh-Shurkiyeh,§ and from its locality among the waters of the Nile, it was, like its representative in the present day, a well-watered, rich, and flourishing pro-

* Jablonsky's words are, *Ostendimus rationibus, non contemnendis, Gosen Israelitarum in Egypto domicilium, illam regni hujus provinciam, quam Græci Heracleo polim, Arabes Fayoum nuncupare consueverunt.*—*Dissertat. de terra Gosen*, p. 224.—*Editor*.

† *Genesis* xlvii. 11.

‡ The distance of Hebron from Goshen was about eighty miles, but from the Egyptian capital 300.—*Editor*.

§ According to Robinson, vol. i. 76.

vince,* abounding in pasture, in a variety of vegetable produce, as well as a constant supply of fish from the river.† The nomadic shepherds, who have settlements in this province, drive their cattle far up the Wadys of the desert, and it is probable that at certain seasons the Hebrews in the same manner spread them over the land of Goshen and the neighbourhood, as there is good evidence that in the days of Joseph, they were not a proscribed caste living separately by themselves, but intermingled freely with the native population, much in the same way as the Copts still have their separate villages among the inhabitants of Lower Egypt.‡ Here they continued to live in

* The province of Shurkiyeh still yields the highest revenue of any part of Egypt, and it owes this superior value to its being better irrigated, on account both of its numerous canals, and its surface being less elevated above the length of the Nile than other places. See farther *Bib. Research*. vol. i. p. 78.—*Editor*.

† Deut. xi. 10; Numb. xi. 5; xx. 5. The dainties for which the Hebrews longed are precisely the kind of food on which the Arab Fellahs, who inhabit this district, subsist at present. 'Their food consists of bread made of millet or maize, milk, new cheese, eggs, small salted fish, cucumbers, melons, gourds of a great variety of kinds, onions, leeks, beans, lupins, &c.'—*Lane's Man. and Cus. of the Mod. Egypt*. Dr Robinson mentions a striking fact, that a colony of Tawarah Arabs, consisting of about fifty families, had settled in this province, cultivating the soil, yet dwelling in tents, and retiring in the proper season, to the pastures. The French invasion drove them back to the mountains of the desert; but, like the Israelites of old, they had acquired such a liking for the good things of Egypt, that they could not live in the desert, were discontented, and longed to be back, which they accomplished the moment the French were gone.—*Bib. Research*. vol. i. p. 78.—*Editor*.

‡ *Bib. Research*. vol. i. p. 77; Exod. xi. 2; xii. 13, 22. According to Jablonsky, Rameses signifies the land of shepherds. On the low and marshy meadows with which that district abounded, pasturage was so abundant, that Maillet describes the grass as equal to the stature of a man, and so luxuriant that an ox may browse a whole day lying on the ground. In fact, the soil of Lower Egypt was so prolific as to be favourable to the increase of every species of vegetable and animal life. Aristotle has noticed this circumstance in connexion with the human race, who were produced in that country according to him, frequently in three or four at a birth. If this account be correct, we need not wonder at the extraordinary multiplication of the Israelites during their stay in Egypt. Early marriages,

liberty and independence, prosecuting their pastoral occupations so long as the life of Joseph secured them the patronage of the court. But the death of that minister being soon after followed by a race of new kings, who obtained the kingdom by conquest, they, becoming jealous lest so numerous a caste might endanger their possession of the throne, adopted a new policy toward them, forbidding them to continue the easy and independent life they had enjoyed, and dooming them to hard labour in the erection of works, which were doubtless projected for the purpose of keeping them in constant employment. Instead of leading a nomadic life, they were thenceforth stationed in the two cities Rameses, which is supposed by some to have stood considerably to the east of Cairo, and is the same as Heroopolis—and Pithom, which some think is the Patumos of Herodotus, not far from Bubastis.*

[The government of Egypt was anciently, as it still is, despotic ; the will of the sovereign gave laws to the realm ; and, as happens in all despotic countries, and more particularly those of the East, the subordinate governors, to the lowest in the scale of official power, rival their royal master in the severity of their exactions.† The people were divided into castes, like those of India, as they exist in the present day, and as they formerly prevailed among many oriental nations. ‘At the head of these castes stood that of the priesthood. From this order the king was usually selected : if one

says an intelligent author, polygamy, the longer duration of life, abundance and cheapness of provisions, would tend, under the Divine blessing, still further to promote the population of their fertile district.—*Editor*.

* Dr Robinson places it much farther to the north-east, on the western extremity of the basin of the Bitter Lakes. He is quite satisfied that both the distance and the water must have rendered it impracticable for the Hebrews to have accomplished such a journey in three days.—*Editor*.

† We may mention it as a very curious coincidence between the measures of the present pasha and those pursued by Joseph, that by a late edict all the lands were declared to be the property of the crown.—*Editor*.

of the warriors, the next class in rank, should attain to that eminence, he was always installed and enrolled in the superior order. The priestly caste in rank and power stood far above the rest of the people. The next class in dignity was that of the warriors; while the lower classes of the people constituted the rest of the orders; according to Herodotus five, to Diodorus three, including husbandmen, artisans, and shepherds, manufacturers, and the boatmen of the Nile.' Notwithstanding, the people of that country attained, at a very early period, a character for knowledge and wisdom, which raised them to the highest pinnacle of power and importance in the ancient world. The branches of literature and science chiefly cultivated were astronomy, and its ancient inseparable attendants, astrology and magic, physic, geometry, and architecture. They were, if not the first inventors, the great improvers of the art of writing, which with them, however, consisted in signs of ideas, not in signs of sounds, as with us. Hence their knowledge of historical events was preserved in pictorial representations, of which the walls of their temples still afford the most precious and interesting specimens. These, indeed, are not superior in execution to the rude and humble efforts of a sign-painter. But through this channel, as the walls of the temples and halls are covered with an endless profusion of paintings on the plaster, which, when the rubbish is removed, appears still fresh and entire, we have acquired as minute a knowledge of their mythology, military customs, battle scenes, private manners, and domestic arts, the processes of agriculture and vintage, brick-making, wood-cutting, fishing, fowling, entertainments and amusements, as if we were contemporaries of the Pharaohs. This method of writing, which arose at first from necessity, was afterwards retained by the native priests, whose great object was to conceal their knowledge under the veil of allegory. From them the Greeks acknowledged they borrowed

the most valuable portion of the science, which their celebrated philosophers appropriated and adorned with their own tasteful embellishments ;—Homer, and his tuneful brethren, their famed wars and amours of the gods ; Solon and Lycurgus, their code of laws and institutions ; Pythagoras, the principles of his philosophy ; Euclid, his physical science ; the painters and statuaries, their skill and refinement in the arts. The Nilometers, laboriously marked by divisions of cubits and inches, erected at various parts of the country, and the pyramids, which have formed the wonder and admiration of the world, afford the strongest proofs of their proficiency both in geometry and architecture ; and if the priests of Egypt had not been studious to impart to every thing an air of mystery, and confine their attainments, with the most zealous care, within the impenetrable walls of their own colleges, we should undoubtedly have had cause for unqualified admiration of those who were learned in the wisdom of the Egyptians.

[The mechanical skill of the Egyptians was rude, or at least did not rise above mediocrity. All their science and refinement being monopolized by the order of the priests, to which it was hopeless for any of humbler birth to aspire, the lower classes were strangers to the strong incentives of independence and distinction which in free countries encourage improvements in the useful arts, and were doomed to labour on in the same beaten track as their fathers had done for generations before them. Still, however, the Egyptians were not without both trade and manufactures. Of the former, the most common were pottery (most of their household vessels being made of earthenware) and tiling and brick-making, carpenter and smith-work, and embalming, together with the preparation of mummies. As to manufactures, the chief were those of paper, from the pith of the papyrus ; and linen, which was there woven of superior texture, and formed a considerable article of export. .

Of the pith of the three-cornered reed, the papyrus, which grew in great abundance on the banks of the Nile, paper was manufactured of a dim yellow colour. The raw material seems to have been prepared and dried chiefly by pressing it, and then the pieces were glued together so nicely, that the places of junction were not perceptible. Coarse stuffs, such as sail-cloth, were also made of the same substance ; and although this reed is now only to be found in the neighbourhood of Damietta, and the banks of Lake Mensala, it is still used for this latter purpose ; the Canjia, in which Mr Bruce sailed on the Nile, being supplied with sails made of the papyrus. The cultivation of flax, for which the climate was admirably suited, gave Egypt the monopoly of the linen manufacture of the ancient world ; and although it of course varied in quality, there is reason to believe, from some specimens found in the wrappings of mummies, that it deserved all the commendation implied in the 'fine linen' of Egypt. Cloth of cotton (byssus) was also woven on a considerable scale ; and both in that species of manufacture, and in pottery, some of the Israelites, during their sojourn in Egypt, seem to have acquired celebrity for skill and enterprise.*

[The waters of their national river, of course, early drew attention to the art of navigation ; and while the larger ships, in which they cruised along the Mediterranean, and trafficked with foreign countries, were constructed of solid and durable timber, the little skiffs in which they floated on the gentle surface of the Nile, were, as the prophet described them, simple vessels of bulrush.† This material, the well-known papyrus, which grew in great abundance on its banks, is a thick, strong, tough, and withal pliant reed, and capable, when wrought into basket-work, of sustaining a heavy load. Boats of this description, plastered over with no other cement than the glutinous slime of the river, and

* 1 Chron. iv. 21-23.

† Isaiah xviii. 2.

called Djerms by the natives, are seen to this day plying on all the waters ; * and we need not wonder, therefore, if the mother of Moses ventured her precious charge in so frail a bark. †

[Egypt at no time (at all events not in the age of Joseph) possessed the characteristics of a commercial kingdom,—its wealth and resources principally arising from the cultivation of the soil, the extraordinary productiveness of which made that country the granary of the East. But even at that remote period the luxuries of a southern hemisphere, the produce of foreign countries, were regularly imported into her, though not by the enterprise of native merchants. ‘ We find the Ishmaelites from Gilead conducting a caravan of camels loaded with the spices of India, the balsam and myrrh of Hadramaut, and in the regular course of their traffic, proceeding to Egypt for a market. The date of this transaction is more than seventeen centuries prior to the christian era ; and notwithstanding its antiquity, it has all the genuine features of a caravan crossing the desert at the present hour. In the thirtieth chapter of Exodus, also, there is an enumeration of cassia, myrrh, frankincense, stacte, onycha, and galbanum, all of which are the produce either of India or of Arabia, some of them not to be found nearer Egypt or Palestine than Ceylon or the coast of Malabar. If, then, they were found in Egypt, there must have been intermediate carriers, and a commercial intercourse even in that age must have been open between India and Egypt. These considerations induce a belief that even prior to the time of Moses, the communication with India was open, that the intercourse with that continent was in the hands of the Arabians, or Ishmaelitish merchants, that Thebes

* Several of these were taken at Aboukir by the ships under Sir Sidney Smith.—*Editor.*

† The Egyptians have a tradition, that the mother of Moses deposited the ark of bulrushes containing her child on the steps of the Nile-meter, just above the ripple of the waters.—*Editor.*

owed its splendour to that commerce, and that Memphis rose from the same cause to the same pre-eminence.*

[The religion of the ancient Egyptians, more than any thing else connected with their institutions and manners, has excited the curiosity of every succeeding age. No where did superstition reign with so despotic an influence, and in so gross a character; no nation ever divided their homage among such a vast multiplicity of deities, as the people who boasted that wisdom dwelt with them. Osiris and Isis, or the sun and moon, Anubis, Chemmis, Phthah, Thoth or Hermes, Athor or Venus, Apis, were the names of their principal idols, which were worshipped under appropriate symbols; as, for instance, Osiris under the form of a bull, Apis under that of a calf, &c. To such an extent did they carry this system of animal worship, that cats, hawks, serpents, crocodiles, fishes, every creature of earth, air, and the sea, nay, plants and trees, in short, almost every object in nature, claimed a share of their religious veneration, and was honoured with the performance of peculiar rites.† Whether this gross superstition had existed at a remote period among the aborigines of Egypt, and had taken too inveterate a hold of their barbarian minds to be eradicated, or whether the artful priests contrived it with the view of enslaving the humbler castes, it is impossible to ascertain. The admirers of the ancient Egyptians, indeed, affirm that the higher and more enlightened classes regarded these sensible objects of their worship merely as visible manifestations of the spirit or living principle in animals, plants, trees, mountains, and rivers. They maintain that the whole system was symbolical,—as may be judged of from figures having a horse's head with a human eye, being emblematical of the union of knowledge

* Dr Vincent Periplus.

† Whoever, even by accident, killed one of the sacred animals, incurred the punishment of sacrilege.—*Editor.*

with power ; and figures of Saturn, or Chronos, with the head of a crocodile, designed to be an emblem of time, which, like that voracious creature, is devouring and all-destructive. But the vast majority of the people had no such ideas of any mystic symbols. With blind credulity, and the most infatuated ignorance, they were ready, from opposite motives, to revere what conferred on them a benefit, or awakened their fears ; and, indeed, the attributes of the Egyptian idols were so grotesque, that so far from being associated with any inward sentiment of a devotional kind, the sight of them could inspire nothing but the feeling of ridicule and merriment. ‘On all sides,’ says St John, ‘we have gods with dog’s and cat’s heads ; gods with monkey’s tails, and ram’s tails, with foolish faces, and in the most ludicrous attitudes.’ Besides, there cannot be a greater proof of the grossness of Egyptian superstition, than that, at certain seasons, human sacrifices were offered till an advanced period of their national history ;* and on all occasions these dark and sensual rites were performed in the recesses of temples, as may be seen from Ezekiel’s description of the chambers of imagery. What people, by their disgusting and insensate idolatries, did more to provoke the righteous indignation of heaven, and what land has more signally felt it ?

[The plagues with which Moses was commanded to afflict the land for the unbelief and obstinacy of the king, the priests, and the people, were many of them adapted, with consummate wisdom, to rebuke the Egyptians for their idolatry. Thus, as the river was the great object of national admiration, and Pharaoh, when Moses and Aaron stood before him, was probably about to engage in some ablution, or other ceremonious token of his gratitude to the sacred stream, its waters, for some days, were turned into the disgusting colour of

* A boy and girl were annually sacrificed to the Nile and its inhabitants.—*Editor.*

blood ; while its fish, which were also the objects of superstitious regard, perished. From the same source was made to issue the brood of frogs in such numbers, that the houses, chambers, and beds swarmed with the unclean and loathsome reptiles, which, as the spawn of a river they so much gloried in, was a more humiliating and painful spectacle than even the first plague had been. The priests of Egypt, like the Brahmins of India, were led by their religion to be superstitiously abhorrent of the least personal impurity ; and to these deep-rooted prejudices, therefore, the plague of lice was addressed. Murrain seized all their cattle, and the severity of this plague may be judged of by the fact, that the principal deities of the Egyptians embraced the useful cattle, to some of whom the most splendid temples were erected ; such as at Thebes, where the ram was worshipped ; at Mendes, where the goat was the special object of veneration ; while the bull, Apis, was honoured as a divinity every where. Moses took the ashes of a furnace, in all probability one of those at which the miserable serfs, his countrymen, were toiling, and scattering them in the air or mud, boils broke out on the skin of every individual ; and it is said that this had a reference to a barbarous custom of the idolatrous Egyptians, who annually burnt alive some persons, distinguished by red skin, supposed to have been Israelites, and scattered their ashes to the wind.

[*Civil History*.—Egypt, in the time of Abraham, seems to have been occupied by a great number of petty princes, who were, however, gradually reduced, and their several dominions united under one monarch, who swayed the whole land under the name of Pharaoh. The events that occurred from the introduction of Joseph into that country, till the exodus of the Israelites in the reign of a tyrannical and warlike prince, who is supposed to be the Sesostris of profane history, are well known to every reader of the Bible. From that

time, till the reign of Pharaoh-Necho (the Nechus of the classics) there is no mention of Egypt in the sacred records. That monarch being bent on the subjugation of Syria and Phœnicia, demanded a passage through Palestine, which, being refused by Josiah, hostilities were declared, and an engagement took place in the valley of Meggido, which was fatal to the king of Judah.* At a subsequent period, Pharaoh-Hophra (Apries), with whom Zedekiah formed an unhappy alliance against his Babylonish liege lord,† was taken prisoner, carried to Sais, and strangled according to the prophecy of Jeremiah‡ by the hands of rebels. Amaris, as viceroy of the king of Babylon, had a long and prosperous reign, and was succeeded by Psammeticus, who, having attempted to restore independence to his kingdom, was opposed and defeated by Cambyses, who accomplished the prophetic denunciation of Ezekiel, that ‘there should no more be a prince of the land of Egypt.§ The Persians, the Macedonians, both under Alexander the Great and the Ptolemies, the Mamelukes and Turks in modern times, have successively swayed the destinies of this country. But no native prince, no son of a former ruler, has ever, in a solitary instance, been elevated to the throne. From this renowned country every vestige of its former glory has departed, or remains in such a deplorable state of dilapidation and ruins, as to throw, from the glimpses they afford of her ancient greatness, a deeper gloom on the obscurity and degradation into which she has fallen. Once the envied seat of the literature and refinement of the world, enlightened by universities, from which even the vain Greeks were fain to borrow the lights of their philosophy, and possessing hidden treasures of wisdom, out of which other people drew the models of their institutions and laws; blessed with a genial climate, a productive soil, to which the physical peculiarities of the country afford every wished-

* 2 Chron. xxxv. 20.

† Jeremiah xlv. 30,

‡ Jeremiah xxxvii.

§ Ezekiel xxx. 13.

for advantage for cultivation, nothing but centuries of misrule could have reduced the land to that state of wide-spread desolation, and stamped the people with the character of abject ignorance, and unblushing vice, which have long been melancholy features of Egypt. But whatever secondary causes we may be able to assign, as having contributed to bring about so sad and humiliating a change, every reader of the Bible must see, written in legible characters, the stern fulfilment of the divine threatening, that Egypt 'should be the basest of kingdoms.'*

[In conducting the march of the Israelites from Egypt, though it seems, after the immemorial arrangement of caravans in the East, to have been consigned to the management of five presiding officers, the chief burden devolved on Moses; and as that illustrious leader, probably by the special command of God, has recorded the principal stages of the journey, it is indispensable for the right understanding of an interesting and important part of the word of God, to trace the geographical bearings of that memorable route. At Rameses, the capital of Goshen, which probably from that circumstance was itself called the 'land of Rameses,' and which seems to have been the place of general rendezvous for all the Hebrew slaves from the different cities in which they were located, there were two routes to Canaan, the one northward by the coast of the Mediterranean, which was the nearest and most common; the other, along the western arm of the Red Sea, through the wild and inhospitable desert that divides Egypt from Arabia Petræa. The former the divine oracle declared to be impracticable, as it ran through the heart of the country of the Philistines, a fierce and warlike tribe, who would be sure to dispute the entrance of so vast a body of people within their territories, and whose determined opposition might tend to dispirit the emigrants at the outset

* Ezekiel xxix. 15.

of their journey. By the latter, therefore, though much more circuitous, Moses was commanded to set out with the people, and while his own experience of this unfrequented track precluded the possibility of his being able to choose the stages best adapted for the accommodation of shade and water, while the mind of so vigilant and reflecting a leader would anticipate the exhaustion in a short time of the few hasty preparations that had been made for the journey, without his having the means of dealing out further rations to the people, he scrupled not to commit himself, with his mighty charge, to the hazards of an expedition through the interminable wilderness, confidently relying on his father's God for the necessary supplies, as well as for rendering them all the offices of a safe and unerring guide. The first two stages were at Succoth and Etham, and nothing occurred during that preliminary part of their journey to put the faith of Moses and his followers to any severe test of its stability. They had as yet no cause to dread either the opposition of a new, or the pursuit of their old, enemy; and even if such an unexpected crisis had arrived, they were at the latter stage encamped on the borders of the desert, into which a short march would have placed them beyond the reach of their pursuers, as the chariots and horsemen of which the militia of Egypt chiefly consisted, would have made little progress over dry and yielding sand, fit only for the broad hoof of a camel. Every thing was calculated to keep in high spirits both the people and their leader—the one exulting in their newly acquired independence, and feeling as yet only the pleasures, without either the tedium or the privations incident to a migratory life, and the other buoyed up with the patriotic ambition of establishing his countrymen in the inheritance of their fathers, marched on the first two days in the mutual satisfaction that every fresh journey was bringing them nearer to the land of promise. But at

Etham, instead of pursuing their journey eastward, with the sea on their right, they were suddenly commanded to diverge to the south, keeping the gulf on their left,—a route which not only detained them lingering on the confines of Egypt, and consequently within easier reach of their ancient oppressors, but in adopting it they actually turned their backs on the land of which they had set out to obtain possession. A movement so unexpected, and of which the ultimate design was carefully concealed, could not but excite the astonishment of Moses, who, as he was then approaching the pastoral tracks of Jethro, was well acquainted with the geographical bearings of that part of the desert. Nevertheless he obeyed the mandate of the oracle, and encamped at Pi-hahiroth. The following observations of a recent traveller already referred to, will tend to throw still further light on the account of the sacred historian. ‘From the land of Goshen to the Red Sea the direct and only route was along the valley of the ancient canal, extended in a north-west direction, along the bed of the Bitter Lakes, and then by a course directly west joined the Nile at Bubastis or Phibeseth. The Israelites broke up their rendezvous at Rameses “on the fifteenth day of the first month, on the morrow after the pass-over,” and proceeded by Succoth and Etham to the sea. Without stopping to inquire as to the identity of Rameses with Heroopolis, or the position of the latter place, it is enough for our purpose that the former town (as is generally admitted) lay probably on the valley of the canal in the middle part, not far from the western extremity of the basin of the Bitter Lakes. Nor is it necessary to discuss the point whether this basin anciently formed a prolongation of the gulf of the Red Sea, as is supposed by some, or as is more probable, was covered with brackish water, separated from the Red Sea, as now, by a track of higher ground. Nothing more is needed for our pre-

sent purpose, even admitting that a communication existed from this basin to the sea, than to suppose that the inlet, if any, was already so small, as to present no important obstacle to the advance of the Israelites.

[From Rameses to the head of the gulf would be a distance of about thirty or thirty-five miles, which might easily be passed over by the Israelites in three days, the period which they seem to have occupied in the journey, and the period also which Moses had specified to Pharaoh, as determining the distance to which they were to proceed into the wilderness.

[A large portion of the people were apparently collected at Rameses, waiting for permission to depart, when the last great plague took place. From the time that Pharaoh dismissed Moses and Aaron on the night of the fourteenth day of the month (which, according to the Jewish computation, was the night before the fourteenth day), until the morning of the fifteenth day, when the people set off, there was an interval of about thirty hours, during which their leaders could easily reach Rameses from the court of Pharaoh, whether this were at Memphis (near Cairo), or, as is more probable, at Zoan or Tanis.*

[The first day's march brought them to Succoth, a name signifying 'booths,' which might be applied to any temporary station or encampment. Whether there was water here is not mentioned, and the position of the place cannot be determined. On the second day they reached Etham, 'in the edge of the wilderness.'† What wilderness? The Israelites, after passing the Red Sea, are said in Exodus to have gone three days' march into the desert of Shur; but in Numbers the

* The Psalmist makes the field or plain of Zoan the scene of the miracles of Moses, Psalm lxxviii. 13, 43. This district, according to Robinson, in which the Pharaohs seem to have had a palace, lay at the mouth of the Tanaitic branch of the Nile, north-west of the Red Sea, and in a straight line with Rameses and this gulf.—*Editor.*

† Exodus xiii. 20; Numbers xxxiii. 6.

same track is called the desert of Etham.* It hence follows that Etham probably lay on the edge of this eastern desert, perhaps not far distant from the head of the gulf, and on the eastern side of the line of the gulf or canal. May it not have stood upon or near the strip of land between the gulf and the basin of the Bitter Lakes? the name Etham being derived by Jablonsky from Attiom, which, in the Egyptian etymology, signifies 'border of the sea.' At any rate, it would seem to have been the point from which the direct course of the Israelites to Sinai would have led them round the present head of the gulf, and along its eastern side. From Etham they 'turned' more to the right; and, instead of passing along the eastern side they marched down the western side of the arm of the Red Sea to the vicinity of Suez. This movement, apparently so directly out of their course, might well give Pharaoh occasion to say, 'they are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in;' and lead him to pursue them with his horsemen and chariots in the hope of speedily overtaking and forcing them to return.†

[The position of Migdol, Pi-hahiroth, and Baal-zephon, cannot, of course, be determined, except that they probably were on or near the great plain back of Suez. If the wells of Ajrud and Bir Suweiss were then in existence, they would naturally mark the sites of towns; but there is no direct evidence either for or against such an hypothesis. That this point so important for the navigation of the Red Sea, was already occupied by a town, perhaps Baal-zephon, is not improbable. A few centuries later several cities lay in the vicinity, and these must have had wells, or there were more fountains than at present. In this plain the Israelites would have abundant space for their encampment.‡

[Pi-hahiroth, however, according to other learned writers, signifies the mouth or opening of the moun-

* Exodus xv. 22; Numbers xxxiii. 8.

† Exodus xiv. 2, 3.

‡ Biblical Researches, vol. i. pp. 80, 81.

tains, and can still be determined by the natural features of the country in the locality, to be a spacious bay formed by the extremities of two mountain chains, which, after running at a great distance from each other on either side of an extensive valley, terminate almost in a junction on the western shore of the Red Sea. Those who hold this opinion, place Rameses on the east side of the Nile, opposite the site of ancient Memphis, and near that of the modern Cairo. According to them, it occupied the position of the present Bessatin, and the plain was so spacious, that it was well fitted to be the general rendezvous for the families of Israel. 'I have myself,' says Sicard, one of the most zealous advocates of this theory, 'made the calculation on the spot, and the following is the result of my observations:—From Mount Diouchi to the Nile, the plain is 6000 common paces wide, and 12,011 long. Now, if a rank of 2000 men were drawn up in a space of this length, there would be precisely six clear paces between man and man; and if, in its width, there were 1200 files, each of which consisted of 2000 men, having five paces from file to file, it is evident that two millions and a half at least, could be commodiously encamped, and each man being distant six paces one way, and five the other, from his neighbour, the intervening space would be amply sufficient for their flocks and camels. It is separated from the royal city of Memphis only by the bed of the Nile; so that Moses might most readily, and in a very short space of time, both visit Pharaoh's court and return in haste to give his orders to the Israelites to depart. From Rameses the route of the Hebrews was directly east, through the spacious valley formed by the continuous range of Diouchi and Torah, which join their extremities at the western shore of the Red Sea, opposite Sinai. The valley is so wide that, even in the narrowest part of it, several thousand persons could walk abreast; and, with regard to forage, the whole length of the valley, although like the vast grassy

steppes which are not inhabited by a fixed population, it is called in the Hebrew idiom, a wilderness, abounding with tamarisk, clover, and sanfoin, of which camels are passionately fond, as well as with a variety of brushwood for kindling fires. The first station in their route was Gendeli, close by a perennial spring, which signifies in Arabic, the same as Succoth in the Hebrew, 'the place of pitching tents;' the second station was at Ramlie, the ancient Etham, situated in a fine level amphitheatre about six miles wide. Ramlie lies on the edge of the wilderness, as Etham is described to be, for, on quitting Etham, there is a defile which continues without interruption for several miles, and it is so narrow that, as twelve men could not walk abreast, more than a day would have been required to enable the Israelites to tread their way through this pass, and it would have been in the highest degree imprudent and dangerous to hazard such delay. By the command of God, therefore, instead of entering this defile, they were commanded 'to turn,' to retrace their steps from the way of Etham, and to wind round the foot of the mountain till they passed the sharp promontory formed by the extremity of the amphitheatrical chain of the mountains of Torah, after which they entered on the spacious plain of Bedeah, a level track of ground extending a considerable way along the shore of the Red Sea, terminated on the north by the mountain chain of Attâkah, the most remarkable peak of which is Baal-zephon; and on the south by the parallel chain of Gewoubee. At this point these two chains approach so nearly as almost to unite, leaving, however, a narrow opening, supposed to be the Pi-hahiroth of Scripture. Never, to all human appearance, was a position more injudiciously taken up, as it was not only from its narrow limits ill adapted for a regular encampment, but so totally unprovided with facilities either for resistance or retreat, that it would have seemed the last place a skilful and experienced leader would have

chosen who had reason to dread the sudden incursions of an enemy. On either side, it was surrounded by rugged and precipitous cliffs, the passes of which were so strait, that a single person could with difficulty penetrate them, while their summits being easily accessible from without, afforded a vantage ground from which an enemy could with impunity discharge a shower of missiles on the defenceless crowd below. Before them was a gulf many miles in breadth, a terrific spectacle to a people whom the stern laws of slavery had never permitted to wander from their native hovels, and who had never seen any greater expanse of water than the Nile, or the artificial canals by which Egypt was irrigated. In this natural basin Moses halted with his followers, and scarcely had they pitched their tents, when, the king having recovered from his panic, and ascertained from some spies that the Hebrews were meditating a flight, and summoned his forces, the greater part of which being stationed as a guard on the frontiers, could be speedily mustered, than the plain behind them appeared glittering with armed men, in whose impetuous movements, scythe-armed chariots, and peculiar war-cry, they descried their Egyptian oppressors. In their situation, all the disadvantages of which instantly forced themselves on their view, where could they look for deliverance? The mountain on the right and left presented an insurmountable barrier to so vast a multitude. The sea on whose shore they were encamped, had no ford, or at least they were too little acquainted with its ebb and flow to trust to the tide for so long a period as was necessary for transporting three millions of people.* Their only rational hope of preservation, therefore, lay in the direction of the plain through which their pursuers were advancing. But they were so panic-struck,

* The narrative of Moses states that there were six hundred thousand adults, which, including families, will, according to the most approved principles of statistics, amount to nearly three millions.—*Editor.*

that the idea of resistance was as much a stranger to their breasts, as the weapons of war were to their undisciplined hands; to flee on foot, and over sand, encumbered as they were with children, cattle, and other effects, was impracticable, from an enemy provided with the means of rapid pursuit; while to throw themselves on the tender mercies of the Egyptians, the only alternative left to them, seemed the most desperate course of all,—their imaginations already picturing the bastinado, the dungeon, the triple chains, with which the merciless tyrants would revenge their conspiracy and flight. Among a people who thus saw no alternative between the sword of their assailants and a watery grave, all sense of subordination to their leader was instantly lost. Notwithstanding the visible tokens of the Divine guidance and protection in the cloud that preceded them, they had come from daily familiarity to regard it with the same indifference as the other natural phenomena by which the heavens declare the presence and the glory of God. The little faith which had ever leavened the multitude at large entirely vanished from men in whose breasts fear had extinguished every manly and pious sentiment; and by a transition not uncommon to a people in a state of desperation, they fell into transports of unrestrained indignation against the man whom, but a little before, they had followed and viewed as the delegate of heaven. From one end of the camp to the other, the mingled cries of despair and execration arose—husbands and wives, parents and children looking upon themselves as victims ready for the slaughter, doomed to what their Egyptianized imaginations represented as the most horrible fate,—to die without the rites of sepulture, and leave their carcases a prey to the unclean and carnivorous tenants of the desert.*

* Every reader is aware of the elaborate care and great expense bestowed by the ancient Egyptians in embalming the dead.—*Editor.*

[Never, perhaps, was the fortitude of a man more severely tried than that of Moses on this memorable occasion, exposed as he was to various and inevitable dangers—the most formidable of which undoubtedly was the vengeance of a seditious and desperate multitude, ready to burst in concentrated fury on his devoted head. But not more immoveable were the rocks on the shore of the Red Sea, than he was on that dreadful emergency, ‘amid the tumults of the people;’ and the attitude of meek and magnanimous composure he maintained before that host of mutineers, maddened by the most lawless and discordant passions, while an enemy, burning with revenge, was almost on the borders of their camp, and the wild pent up locality showed that all hope of natural relief or covert was vain, presents one of the sublimest spectacles of moral courage to be found in the whole compass of history. And whence did that courage arise? Neither in the powers of his own mind, nor in the resources of experience, could he find any expedient to meet the crisis. His confidence was supported solely by the hope of a Divine interposition. He saw the miraculous cloud still accompanying them, which, as sure as the rainbow was the sign of peace, he looked to as the token of Almighty protection, although he was unable to anticipate the way in which it would be rendered. In every quarter he would naturally look for deliverance rather than in the direction of the sea; and sooner perhaps would he have thought that the angel of death would strew the plain with the carcasses of Pharaoh and his troops, as he had formerly spread simultaneous havoc in all the houses of Egypt, or that the sea would disappear through subterranean caverns, than that so restless an element would be tamed into the calmness and consistency of solid matter, and retire so as to afford ample room and verge enough for so mighty a multitude to cross. But when, in answer to his prayers, he received the Divine command to go forward, he no longer doubted that the

obedient waters would open a pathway. In the faith of its newly communicated virtues, he waved his rod over the liquid expanse, and, undismayed by the impetuous rush of the billows, or the furious gust of the east wind, he first planted his footsteps in the untrodden sand, and entering the awful defile, summoned the people to follow him, without apprehension of the treacherous walls.

[Several different theories have been advanced, supported with a great deal of ingenuity and learning, to fix the place where the memorable passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea was effected. One, supported by those who carry that people to the plain of Bedeah, determines Pi-hahiroth, itself only half a mile from shore, to be about seventy miles down the western coast of the Red Sea, at a point where, although the sea is from twelve to fifteen miles broad, it is thought there would be ample time for the vast multitude to reach the opposite shore between sun-set and three next morning. ' Before the hosts of Israel entered the bed of the sea, they probably drew up in a broad front of three or four leagues, each tribe marching in its columns, whilst as they advanced, a hot and dry wind from the Lybian desert, dried up the sea before them. Pharaoh, I have before observed, must have encamped behind the mountain of Baal-zephon, in order to cut off the only chance of escape towards Suez. In this position, especially after evening was closed in, he could not distinctly discover that the sea opened, and that the first troops of the Israelites were already fling off. Secure in the idea that the Hebrews were completely hemmed in, and had no possible chance of escape, Pharaoh, as Josephus informs us, deferred all thoughts of attacking them till the morrow. Night came on, and we may suppose the Israelites to have made a considerable progress ; when at length, the motion of such an immense multitude of men, women, children, herds. and baggage, redoubling on all sides, was heard by the

Egyptians, orders were forthwith issued by the infatuated king to pursue. But as 600 armed chariots were to be harnessed, although the greatest expedition would be made, a considerable time, as Josephus expressly relates, elapsed. They soon perceived that the voices of the multitude before them conducted them not towards Baal-zephon, but towards the shore, and imagining that fear had absolutely distracted the hosts of Israel, and led them, in the depth of despair, to plunge themselves into inevitable death, they hastened their march, in order that, by pressing on their rear, they might, according to Josephus, complete their absolute annihilation. Meanwhile, Pharaoh rapidly approaches the shore, when the angel of the covenant, who had hitherto marched in a pillar of fire at the head of the camp of Israel, now suddenly transported it to the rear, and by a new prodigy, the very same pillar which shed a bright light over all the camp of the Israelites, over all the expanse of waters, and over the whole horizon in front, presented a black and menacing column of lurid clouds to the Egyptians; and enveloped in darkness and in dense mists and fogs, the whole backward horizon towards Pharaoh and his army, so that they had not the slightest suspicion or knowledge that they were traversing the bed of the sea. I have myself examined the channel all around this spot, with the sole view to the miraculous passage of the children of Israel, and can fully declare that it is in all respects perfectly similar to the plain of Bedeah, and only presents a continuation of the same firm, even, and level sand, without the least mud or ooze, and thickly interspersed with soft green saline plants; in short, it is in no respect whatever different from the plain in which they encamped the day before. Hence the Egyptians, enveloped in darkness, and eager in the pursuit, could not precisely distinguish where the plain terminated, and the bed of the sea began. And when at length the distance must have convinced them that the water was unusually

low, they still, Josephus informs us, concluded themselves in perfect safety, whilst preceded by the hosts of the Hebrews. They marched onwards till the fourth watch, or about three o'clock in the morning; when the rear of the Hebrew body was about to gain the opposite shore, the east wind fell as suddenly as it had risen, and the rush of the impetuous waters, accompanied with a terrific storm of thunder and lightning, awoke the infatuated Egyptians to the horrors of a situation from which they found it now impossible to escape.*

[Another theory fixes the passage of the Israelites about ten hours journey farther down than the modern town of Suez, and is the opinion generally entertained by the most eminent biblical scholars; the place of their landing being near Ayun Musa, the fountains of Moses. It was first suggested by Niebuhr, afterwards adopted by Burckhardt. A third theory, fixing the passage near Suez, has been recently brought forward by Dr Robinson, with so much learning and force of argument, that we shall quote the words of this interesting traveller.

[‘The question here has respect to the part of the sea where the passage took place. This many writers and travellers have assumed to be the point at the mouth of Wady Tawârik, principally because, perhaps, they supposed that the Israelites passed down that valley. But, according to the preceding views, this could not well have taken place, and therefore, if they crossed at that point, they must have passed down (between the sea and the mountain) around Ras Atâkah, and encamped in the plain at the mouth of the valley.

[‘The discussion of this question has often been embarrassed by not sufficiently attending to the circumstances narrated by the sacred historian, which are, in the main point, the following:—“The Israelites, hemmed in on all sides,—on their left and in front the sea,—on their right Jabel Atâkah,—and behind them

* Sicard.

the Egyptians,—began to despair of escape, and to murmur against Moses. The Lord now directed Moses to stretch out his rod over the sea ; and the Lord caused the sea to flow (Heb. *go*) by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry ; and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry (ground), and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. The Egyptians pursued and went in after them ; and in the morning-watch the Lord troubled the host of the Egyptians. And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared, and the Egyptians fled against it ; and the waters returned and covered all the host of Pharaoh.*

[‘ In this narrative there are two points on which the whole question may be said to turn. The first is *the means* or instrument with which the miracle was wrought. The Lord, it is said, caused the sea to go (or flow out) *by a strong east wind*. The miracle, therefore, is represented as mediate ; not a direct suspension of, or interference with, the laws of nature, but a miraculous adaptation of these laws to produce a required result. It was wrought by natural means supernaturally applied. For this reason we are entitled to look only for natural effects arising from the operation of such a cause. In the somewhat indefinite phraseology of the Hebrew, an east wind means any wind from the eastern quarter, and would include the north-east wind, which often prevails in this region. Now, it will be obvious from the inspection of any good map of the gulf, that a strong north-east wind acting here upon the ebb tide would necessarily have the effect to drive out the waters from the small arm of the sea which runs up by Suez, and also from the end of the gulf itself, leaving the shallower portions dry, while the more northern part of the arm, which was anciently

* Exodus xiv. 11, 12, 21-28.

broader and deeper than at present, would still remain covered with water. Thus the waters would be divided, and be a wall (or defence) to the Israelites on the right hand and on the left. Nor will it be less obvious, from a similar inspection, that in no other part of the whole gulf would a north-east wind (or any wind) act in the same manner to drive out the waters. On this ground, then, this hypothesis of a passage through the sea opposite to Wady Tawârik would be untenable.

[‘The second main point has respect to the interval of *time* during which the passage was effected. It was night, for the Lord caused the sea to go (out) “all night ;” and when the morning appeared, it had already returned in its strength, for the Egyptians were overwhelmed in the morning-watch. If, then, as is most probable, the wind thus miraculously sent, acted upon the ebb tide to drive out the waters during the night to a far greater extent than usual, we still cannot assume that this extraordinary ebb, thus brought about by natural means, would continue more than three or four hours at the most. The Israelites were probably on the alert, and entered upon the passage as soon as the way was practicable ; but as the wind must have acted for some time before the required effect would be produced, we cannot well assume that they set off before the middle watch, or towards midnight. Before the morning-watch, or two o’clock, they had probably completed their passage, for the Egyptians had entered after them, and were destroyed before the morning appeared. As the Israelites numbered more than two millions of persons, besides flocks and herds, they would, of course, be able to pass but slowly. If the part left dry were broad enough to enable them to cross in a body one thousand abreast, which would require a space of more than half a mile in breadth (and is perhaps the largest supposition admissible), still the column would be more than two thousand persons in depth, and in all probability could not have extended

less than two miles. It would then have occupied at least an hour in passing over its own length, or in entering the sea ; and deducting this from the largest time intervening before the Egyptians must also have entered the sea, there will remain only time enough, under the circumstances, for the body of the Israelites to have passed, at the most, over a space of three or four miles. This circumstance is fatal to the hypothesis of their having crossed from Wady Tawârik, since the breadth of the sea at that point, according to Niebuhr's measurement, is three German or twelve geographical miles, equal to a whole day's journey.

[' All the preceding considerations tend conclusively to limit the place of passage to the neighbourhood of Suez. The part left dry might have been within the arm which sets up from the gulf, which is now two-thirds of a mile wide in its narrowest part, and was probably once wider ; or it might have been to the southward of this arm, where the broad shoals are still (partially) left bare at the ebb, and the channel is sometimes forded. If similar shoals might be supposed to have anciently existed in this part, the latter supposition would be the most probable. The Israelites would then naturally have crossed from the shore west of Suez, in an oblique direction, a distance of three or four miles from shore to shore. In this case there is room for all the conditions of the miracle to be amply satisfied. Our own observations on the spot, led both my companion and myself to incline to the supposition, that the passage took place at this point.'*]

[We have judged it right to give a condensed view of the main theories which have been propounded on this interesting subject, so well worthy of all the labour and learned research which have been expended on it, in order that our readers may form their own judgment as to which the greater degree of probability and credit is to be attached. From the numerous in-

* Robinson's Biblical Researches, vol. i.

dications that present themselves to the eye of an intelligent observer of the sea having, to a considerable extent changed its ancient bed,—a change, however, that has arisen, not from any difference in its level, but from the continued drifting of sand from the northern desert, it is now perhaps impossible with certainty to ascertain the precise locality of this memorable passage. But it is no small confirmation of the opinion which fixes it at no great distance from Suez, that in the immemorial tradition of the inhabitants, that spot has been associated with the story of an extraordinary reflux of the tide, which was attended with extensive and fatal disaster to the Egyptians. That part of the coast has for ages been regarded by the Arabs with superstitious dread. Not only do the fountains and wells all around bear the names of Moses and Pharaoh, and commemorate some portion of the marvellous incident ; but particularly at Tor and in the bay of Birket Faroun, reefs and shoals abound in every direction, the water rises in tremendous billows, rendering the navigation exceedingly difficult ; and as more shipwrecks have happened there than in any other part of the Red Sea, the Arabs are confirmed in the idea that the loud roar of the tempestuous winds, and the violent agitation of the waves, proceeds from the spirits of the drowned, the disembodied ghosts of the Egyptians, which in revenge are continually busy in plotting the ruin of all who venture on that gulf. If these notions were the growth of modern superstition, they would be deserving of no attention, and carry no weight. But they have prevailed from the earliest times among the sea-faring people, a class proverbial for their faithful transmission of all strange and portentous occurrences at sea ; and what is worthy of particular notice, the Troglodytes, the indigenous inhabitants of that very spot, according to Diodorus Siculus, had a tradition current among them from a remote age, that at one time the

sea was parted there, the channel left dry, and the divided waters returned again with fearful impetuosity. 'The words of this author,' says Bruce, 'are very remarkable. We cannot think that this heathen is writing in favour of revelation. He knew not Moses, nor says a word about Pharaoh and his host, but records the miracle of the division of the sea, in words nearly as strong as those of Moses, from the mouths of unbiassed, undesigning pagans.'

[At this spot the beach is hard, firm, and covered over with a variety of sea-weeds, while the opposite shore is low, sandy, and affording a convenient landing place. The depth of the water in the channel, and there are the strongest reasons for believing it was formerly much deeper, is fourteen feet, and at the sides nine, so that at the very least the waters during the passage of the Israelites must have stood on each side fifty feet high, and they very probably rose to a much greater elevation. It must have been a strange and fearful pathway, forming a kind of submarine labyrinth, o'er-canopied by the curtain of the hardly visible heavens, bounded on either side by liquid walls, held firm by an invisible chain, gleaming in ten thousand places, with the reflected glare of the fiery column, and towering to a height from which the Arab daos, that from time immemorial have navigated that sea, might have seemed

'Like wing of a wild bird.'

The wildest spots of the land desert exhibit now and then signs of animation, and the tedium of travelling in those dreary regions is occasionally enlivened by the lonely flower, whose well-known beauties create a host of pleasing associations, or by the rude landmark that tells the silent tale that a human foot has been there before. But in penetrating the solitudes of that untrodden journey there were no objects with which the heart could warm into sympathy, or which

memory could classify with any known genus of the earth's productions. All was new, death-like, and arrayed in the attributes of gloomy awful savage sublimity,—seen but for one moment, to be the next enveloped for ages among the other secrets of the deep, but betokening to that passing glance that they belonged to a foreign kingdom of nature ;—while added to all this, the lowing of the cattle, the hum of the mighty population, and the hoarse thunder of the sultry east wind, reverberating along the dark profound, gave its finish to the terrific character of the scene. But notwithstanding this, the people, emboldened by the example of their leader, and their faith re-established by the cloud's seasonably changing its position, so as to screen them from the view of their pursuers, entered the watery defile, and though at every step they were placing themselves more and more at the mercy of an element, ready from its nature to rush on them with an impetuous and overwhelming torrent, yet they continued their march in the confident assurance that

‘ Regions unknown were safe to them
When God their friend was there.’

[Nor was it with precipitate steps, anxiously relieving themselves of their baggage, to accelerate their flight from the enemy behind, and deeming themselves happy, if amid such an accumulation of dangers, they could only gain the opposite shore with their lives. The journey was performed with the greatest deliberation. The usual arrangements of the caravan were observed; each fell into his own place as before; the bearers walking with measured steps, with the venerable relics of their ancestors; fathers carrying the simple furniture of their tents, and mothers their sucking infants on their sides; the younger damsels decked in their Egyptian jewels, and anticipating the song and the dance with which they were soon to celebrate the praises of their divine deliverance; the light-hearted

stripling at their side, eyeing with juvenile curiosity the gems which

‘ The deep unfathomed caves of ocean bear.*

and the vagrant flock, stopping now and then to browse on some straggling sea-weeds ; all moved on in the greatest order, and with a feeling of perfect security,—not the smallest interruption occurred to set fear on edge,—not even the spray was wafted by the east wind to wet their faces or soil their garments ; and the channel over which they trod, though but a moment before soaked with the mass of incumbent waters, was as dry as the sand of the desert, when skimmed by the sultry breath of the sirocco, or scorched for ages by the rays of a tropical sun.

[It were idle to speculate on an incident so plainly miraculous. For all the attempts which the early historians of Egypt, zealous for the honour of their country, first made, and some learned men in modern times have renewed, to prove, that it happened during an extraordinary ebb of the tide, which Moses’ local knowledge enabled him to anticipate, are at variance not only with the tenor of the sacred history, and with the immemorial tradition of the natives of that place, that on one remarkable occasion, the sea opened up a passage through which a wonderful people escaped to the opposite shore, but they are also at variance with the established laws of fluids, and the physical peculiarities of that region. Had the Etesian winds caused, on that occasion, an unprecedented reflux, raising the water to a great height, still, as according to the Mosaic account, there was a wall on the right hand and on the left, it will be impossible on the same principles to rear the wall on the other ; and supposing that the water had been separated into two abrupt and perpendicular masses, yet who that reflects for a moment on the nature of that treacherous element, can suppose that it would

* Niebuhr saw great quantities of coral, rare shell-fish, and other petrifications, in what he considered had been the ancient bed of the sea.—*Editor*.

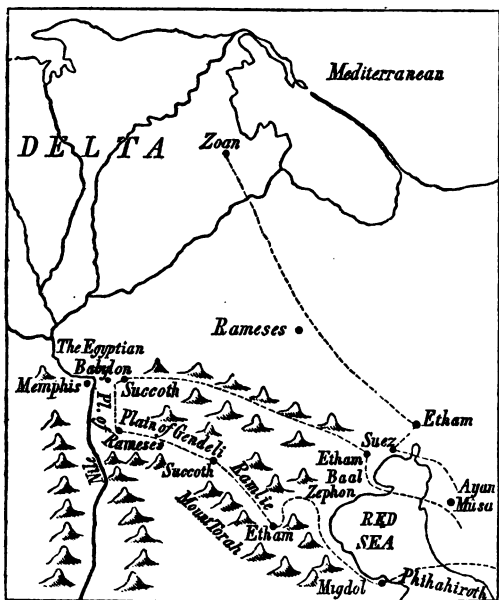
continue in the same confined position, and not seek for itself some outlet, until all the Israelites passed by ?

‘ Would gravitation cease till they went by ? ’

Moreover, if the force of the Etesian winds had produced such an agitation of the waters of the Red Sea, as to leave a great part of the channel dry, the same natural cause must have often produced a similar effect. But the caravans that yearly travel from Cairo to Mount Sinai, and other parts of Arabia, though tempted to explore the whole line of coast by the prospect of saving an immense distance, have never been able to discover such a passage. The truth is, that as the monsoon in that sea blows, during the summer half year from the north, and during the winter half from the south, by neither of which, it is obvious, could the passage of the Israelites have been effected from the western to the opposite shore ; an east wind is expressly stated to have been the agent employed by the Almighty, as if for the purpose of excluding all idea of the operation of natural causes. And when we farther take into account that this part of the gulf where it is supposed the Israelites crossed, has always been notorious for its furious and tempestuous character, we shall be impressed with a higher idea of the divine power by which the passage was effected, and which, when the waters saw, they were afraid and fled.* ‘ If the violent agitation of this bay,’ says Burckhardt, ‘ proceed, as of course it must, from natural causes, and not from the mysterious agent that superstition has assigned, it is probable that the place was as much liable to such a tempestuous motion in the days of Pharaoh as it is now ; and it will give us a higher idea of the deliverance granted to the Israelites, and of the mighty power that achieved it, when we reflect that they passed over in perfect security, and without so much as wetting their feet, through a part of the sea that has always been the scene of the most furious and ungovernable tempests.’

* Psalm lxxvii. 16.

[The subjoined sketch will enable the reader to trace the routes, and to ascertain the various points on the shore of the Red Sea where the passage of the Israelites was effected, according to the three leading hypotheses already described. The most southerly is that put forth by Sicard, who places the point where the passage of the Red Sea took place seventy miles below Suez. The course marked a little north of this is what Niebuhr and Burckhardt suppose to have been the route of the Israelites; who, according to this theory, are farther supposed to have crossed the sea at a point about twelve or fifteen miles below Suez, and to have landed near Ayûn Mûsa, the fountains of Moses. The third route, on the north, is that supported by Dr Robinson.]



[ARABIA.

[Arabia, a country in Asia, lying between 12° and 35° north latitude, and 53° and 78° east longitude, is bounded on the north by part of Syria and the Euphrates, on the east by the mountains of Chaldea, the Persian Gulf, and the Gulf of Ormus; on the south by the Indian Ocean; and on the west by the Red Sea and the Isthmus of Suez. It extends in the form of a peninsula, and is one of the largest in the world, measuring from its northern boundary to Cape Babelmandeb about 1600 miles, and at its greatest breadth, from Cape Rasalhat to the port of Jidda, about 1151.

[*Physical Geography*.—The face of this extensive country is so exceedingly diversified, that no general description can be given that will be applicable to the whole,—several parts of it differing so widely in climate, soil, and natural productions, that they present the character more of separate and independent countries than of one large region designated by a single name. The regions that lie along the shore are beautiful and fertile, the landscape being there agreeably varied by wood and abundance of perennial streams and springs, which, together with the moisture supplied by the sea, and the rains that periodically fall, nourish a rich and luxuriant vegetation on a good and kindly soil. The provinces of Yemen Hadramalet and Oman, have been celebrated in all ages as combining all the strength and genial influences of a temperate with the luxuriance of a tropical climate. Their plains smile with yellow crops of wheat and barley that rival the finest in Europe; while the produce of the mountains equals the richest spices and fruits of India. The natural powers of the soil are so great, that little agricultural appliances are requisite beyond the indispensable labour of irrigating the lands from the wells, or conducting the rain along the artificial rills with which

they are everywhere intersected. The sugar-cane, tobacco and cotton plants, frankincense, the coffee-tree, and the amyris opobalsamum, from which is extracted the Mecca balm,—the most fragrant and valuable of all resinous gums, may be mentioned as amongst the principal of the various productions for which these provinces are distinguished. The central parts of Arabia present a complete contrast to those on the border, being one immense desert, in which, with the exception of a few oases that are found at intervals, the eye of the traveller discovers nothing but a vast and disorderly assemblage of bleak and precipitous mountains, surrounded by an interminable range of low level plains of sand. On every side the country wears an aspect of naked sterility, of barren solitude, as if the genius of desolation had fixed his habitation in the Arabian wilderness. The features of this region are so wild and irregular, so broken by bare rocks or shifting sand, that travellers are obliged to have recourse to the mariner's compass to steer their course ; while their progress is never cheered by any of those smiling objects of nature which in other places impart an agreeable variety to the landscape. There no rivers pour their refreshing streams. The paltry torrents that rush down the sides of the mountains are soon lost in the sandy ground ; and the scanty supplies that can be obtained of that fluid, which is so indispensable an element of life, are derived almost solely from reservoirs of rain or from wells, many of which, owing to the salt with which the desert is deeply impregnated, are so brackish, that nothing but long habit or dire necessity could reconcile one to the use of them. The heat, too, is most oppressive,—the sun at certain seasons exceeding, in the intensity of his rays, even the burning influence of a tropical climate ; and this is the more dangerous, that it is often accompanied by a pestilential wind, which, under the name of the simoom or samiel, sweeps over the heated sands, carrying on its

wings constant destruction to the unfortunate people, who cannot, or know not how to, guard against its fatal effects. Besides, the most furious tempests sometimes prevail in the form of hurricanes, which lift up the sand and drive it along like waves of the sea.

[Among the animals that may be considered indigenous to Arabia, may be mentioned the ostrich, the locust, the jerboa, the antelope or gazelle, the camel or ship of the desert, as the orientals graphically style it, and the Kochlani breed of horses, for which, throughout many centuries, the country has been famous.

[This peninsula, from the time of Ptolemy, has been divided into three parts, distinguished by their characteristic features, viz., Arabia Petræa, Arabia Deserta, and Arabia Felix.

[Arabia Petræa is situated in the north of the peninsula, on the north-east of the Red Sea, bordering on the confines of Egypt and Syria, and connecting the country between the Gulfs of Suez and Acaba. Its name, derived from the stony character of the soil, is truly descriptive of the general state of this division; for except a few cultivated spots, whose verdure assumes a lovelier aspect from its contrast to the surrounding deserts, the province far and wide presents the aspect of a dreary, monotonous, and unfruitful waste. Its surface is covered with a vast collection of bleak, desolate, precipitous mountains, the chief of which are the chain of er-Râhah, which runs from north to south on the eastern side of the Red Sea, that of et-Tih, which extends across the peninsula between both arms of the sea; and that of Horeb, in which is Sinai, memorable as the scene of the Almighty's descent at the promulgation of the law. The Red Sea is in length about 1500 miles from Babelmandeb to Suez, and at its greatest breadth about 150; about 200 south of Suez it is divided into two gulfs, of which the western, bordering on Egypt, retains the name of the Gulf of Suez, while the other, lying in Arabia Petræa, receives the name of

the Elanitic, from the town of Elath at its northern extremity. The name of the Red Sea is not derived from any peculiarity in the colour of its waters, but from Edom or Esau, which, signifying red, was by the Greeks translated erythrus, from which the Romans borrowed the Mare Rubrum, a designation which the influence of that powerful nation has ever since perpetuated. The origin of its Hebrew name, the sea of weeds, is not so easily accounted for, as Mr Bruce declares he could not discover a single weed through the whole extent of it. 'My opinion,' says he, 'is, that it is from the large trees or plants of white coral, spreading every where over the bottom of the Red Sea, that it obtained this name. I saw one of these which, from a root nearly central, threw out ramifications of an almost circular form, measuring twenty-six feet every way.'* The western coast is distinguished from the eastern by its greater depth of water, and by its rocky character. Indeed, the sunken rocks that traverse that part of the shore are so numerous and extensive, as to be the terror of the rude and inexperienced Arab sailors, who usually ply in that sea, while various other parts of the gulf are liable to be agitated with the most violent tempests, which render the navigation both difficult and dangerous. Notwithstanding this sea was long of the greatest importance to the commercial world, forming in ancient times the only channel of communication between Egypt and India, and until the Cape of Good Hope was discovered, the ordinary route by which merchantmen supplied the markets of Europe and Asia with the most valuable exports of their respective con-

* This sea is remarkable for its coral reefs; in connexion with which we cannot resist quoting this interesting observation of Professor Jamieson, 'that the reefs of coral which have been raised in the Red Sea on the east of Egypt, and the sands of the desert which invade it on the west, concur in attesting this truth, that our continents are not of a more remote antiquity than has been assigned to them by the sacred historian in the book of Genesis, from the great era of the deluge.'—*Editor*.

tinents. Arabia Petraea was subdivided into a number of smaller parts, viz., 1, The wilderness of Shur or Etham, situated at the north-east extremity of the Red Sea, extending north to the confines of Palestine, and the first region which the Israelites reached in crossing from Egypt into Arabia; 2, The wilderness of Sin, lying along the Arabian side of the Gulf of Suez, from Elim to the southern extremity of the peninsula;* 3, The wilderness of Sinai, called in Arabic Bahrel Tour Sinai, situated southwards between the two arms of the Red Sea; and, 4, The wilderness of Paran, stretching from that of Sinai, northwards to the borders of Palestine. It formed the settlement of various powerful tribes, the chief of whom were the Ishmaelites and Nabathæans, both of whom traced their descent from Abraham, the Amalekites, and the Midianites. The Amalekites occupied the country lying between the Dead and Red Seas, skirting the borders of Canaan, from Havilah to Shur.† They were the first to attack the Israelites, after their departure from Egypt; and having mustered a formidable army, opposed them in a pitched battle in Rephidim, where, however, they were signally defeated and repulsed.‡ For this act of wanton and unprovoked aggression, they were doomed, by the decree of God, to utter extermination;§ and the history of their subsequent wars with the people of Israel shows how the stern anathema pursued them till their name sunk into obscurity and oblivion.|| The Midianites were spread, more or less, over the whole country, as far south as the Red Sea and Mount Sinai, insomuch that from them it derived the name of the land of Mi-

* The wilderness of Sin is commonly considered as including the whole country to the east of the Gulf of Suez and the Sinaitic range of mountains. But it is evident that in the time of Moses this name was of a more limited extent, since the Israelites are stated to have 'journeyed from the Wilderness of Sin,' when they were four stages from Sinai. Exodus xvii. 1; Numbers xxxiii. 12.—*Editor.*

† 1 Samuel xv. 7.

‡ Exodus xvii. 14.

§ Exodus xvii. 8.

|| Judges vii.; 1 Sam. xv.; xxx.

dian. They seem to have been a powerful and enterprising race, divided into five tribes, who were greatly in advance of their nomadic neighbours,—some of them prosecuting the pastoral life, such as Jethro, while others were engaged in regular commerce with Egypt, located in cities, and organized into a settled government under native princes. Alarmed in common with the adjacent tribes at the march of so vast a population as the Israelites through the wilderness, they had determined on a resolute opposition to their farther progress, and with that design the scattered Midianites seem to have concentrated their forces on the south-east of the Dead Sea. But, distrusting their own courage and ability to cope in open warfare with a people so formidable in numbers, and to whom so many awful portents announced that Heaven was especially favourable, they agreed to change their tactics, and, in concert with the Moabites, endeavoured to effect by artifice what they despaired of accomplishing by the sword. An immense number of young women, adepts in every licentious art, were, by the advice of Balaam, despatched to the camp of Israel, whose beauty and blandishments soon led to such universal dissoluteness, that 24,000 men perished by a pestilence which God commissioned as his agent to punish their crime. But the deep-laid scheme of the Midianites was but partially successful, and their infamous attempt to corrupt and alienate his people was signally avenged on the seducers. A strong force being by the direction of God marched against them, laid waste their country with fire and sword, and carried off immense booty in cattle and other property.*

[It was a long time ere they recovered from the effects of this terrible blow. But in the time of the Judges they had so far regained their former numerical strength, and political power, that they held the

* Numbers xxii. ; xxv. ; xxxi.

land of Israel tributary for the space of seven years. By the celebrated expedition of Gideon, whom God raised to be the champion of his people, not only the yoke of these oppressive masters was shaken off the shoulders of the Israelites, but they were dreadfully prostrated and dispersed, and with the flower of their fighting men, and the death of their princes who fell in that fatal encounter, the sun of their national existence set never to rise again.*

[It is not, however, from being the residence of any of the ancient clans, however celebrated or powerful, which figure in sacred or profane history, that this part of Arabia awakens curiosity and invites attention. The chief source of the interest that attaches to it, is its being the chosen scene where the law of God was promulgated, and where, for thirty-nine years, his people wandered, before permission was granted them to enter the promised land. The travels of the Israelites in this wild and unfrequented country, abounded with so many remarkable displays of the power and goodness of God, and are so important in their bearing upon the illustration of a believer's character and progress in religion, that, with a view to preserve the memory of so extraordinary a dispensation, Moses was expressly commanded by God, not only to record as they occurred, but to recapitulate, the principal and more remarkable events of that lengthened pilgrimage; and it is hoped that it may prove not less an interesting than an edifying exercise, to take a connected survey of the consecutive stations which marked the course of the Israelites, while they wandered through Arabia Petræa,—the physical character and relative position of which, being necessarily unaffected by the lapse of time, may tend, through the intelligent observations and reports of modern travellers, to throw light on an important portion of the word of God.

* Judges vi.; vii.; viii.; Psalm lxxxiii. 9.

[From the spot where the Israelites landed after their miraculous passage through the Red Sea, they had marched three days through the wilderness of Shur, when they arrived at a fountain,—an event, the importance of which is sufficiently indicated by the minute care with which similar occurrences are uniformly chronicled in the record of their journeys. The first exquisite sensations of joy, however, produced by the welcome announcement, gave way to bitter disappointment on discovering, as they ran to slake their burning lips, and dreamt of the sweet water of the Nile, that its contents were so brackish as to render it absolutely unfit for use, and the place was ever afterwards known among them by the name Marah, or bitterness. South from Ayûn Mûsa (the fountains of Moses), the spot which Burckhardt fixes as the landing-place of the Israelites, is the fountain Hawârah, six or eight feet wide, and two feet deep, which in character and situation so exactly answers the description of Moses, that all modern travellers agree in regarding it as Marah. In the opinion of the Arabs, its water is the bitterest in the whole peninsula ; it lies in the direct route, and its distance, about fifteen hours and a quarter, according to the reckoning of the accurate Burckhardt, or sixteen hours and a half, *i. e.* thirty-three geographical miles, from the more northerly point where Dr Robinson supposes them to have reached the eastern shore of the Red Sea, will make a very good journey for such a motley multitude to perform in three days. Around this larger basin there are *seven* or *eight* smaller fountains in Wady Amârah, at a short distance from each other, which, according to Coppin, ‘bubble up with springs which lose themselves in the sand, and to the taste are extremely nitrous and salt,’ thus affording a minute and beautiful instance of the scrupulous accuracy of the inspired historian, who tells us that ‘the people could not drink of the *waters* of Marah, for *they* were bitter.’ The nauseous taste

of this water was corrected by means of a 'tree, which, by the divine direction, Moses cast into it, and it has been thought by many that this invaluable service was rendered by the refreshing berries of the Ghürküd, a shrub that rejoices on the borders of saline springs. But it can hardly be supposed that if this well-known product of the desert was possessed of so important a property, Moses, during his long residence in those regions, should have been ignorant of it, or that after the finger of Jehovah had kindly pointed it out, the precious discovery should not have been carefully preserved, and transmitted from age to age. 'But,' says Dr Robinson, 'we made frequent and diligent inquiries, whether any process is now known among the Bedoween for thus sweetening bad water, either by the juice of berries, or the bark or leaves of any tree, and we were invariably answered in the negative.' There is no doubt, however, that in other parts of the salt desert the natives are acquainted with shrubs which possess this chemical property, and by which they practise the art of purifying and correcting the briny water of the springs. Many travellers declare their having seen the Arabs strew, for this purpose, twigs of the Elvah, a shrub which in form and flower bears a great resemblance to our hawthorn; and when we consider that the greater part of the desert through which the Israelites passed consisted of soil strongly impregnated with saltpetre, it is impossible to conceive how they could avail themselves of many of the watering places they found in their way, except by having recourse to the tree which the Lord pointed out to Moses at Marah.*

* It is said, too, that the first settlers in America attained the same object by shoots of sassafras; and that the Chinese were first led to the general use of the tea-plant, by the success with which they applied it in similar experiments. But with regard to the vegetable substance which Moses was directed to employ for sweetening the waters of Marah, all we know is, that it was 'a tree,' a term so general and indefinite as to render conjecture useless.—*Editor.*

[The next station of the Israelites in their southern progress was at Elim, 'where were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm-trees, and they encamped there by the waters.'* By the common consent of travellers, the scene of this encampment is laid in Wady Girondel or Ghurundel. Nine out of the twelve wells are still in existence, while the seventy palm-trees have increased to a spacious and flourishing plantation. It is a well-known place, being one of the regular stations where the caravans halt, and although the water is somewhat tainted with the saline qualities of the soil, it is comparatively pleasant. In this verdant spot, which furnished the welcome accommodations of shade and water, the Israelites lay encamped for a considerable time.†

[From Ghurundel their route led them on the eastern side of Jebel-Hūmmam, whose peaks, stretching close upon the shore, obstruct the passage in that direction, and after travelling for eight hours over a succession of valleys, they at length pitched at the mouth of Wady-et Taiyibeh, close by the Red Sea.

[From that position they were of necessity led into the great plain, el-Kaa, which extends along the sea-shore, and which in all probability is the desert of Sin. The store of parched corn which they had taken with them on the eve of their departure from Egypt now began to fail, and we need not wonder that it lasted them for several weeks, as some modern travellers on the same route are in the habit of lading their camels with as much as is sufficient both for men and beasts during forty days. Their stock of provisions being exhausted, without the slightest prospect of having it

* Exodus xv. 27.

† This, which lay to the northern extremity of the desert of Sin, was, according to Dr Shaw, two leagues from Tor. The same traveller states, that there are now about 2000 palm-trees. The inhabitants of Tor pointed out to him a place under the shade of these trees, called Hammam-Musa, as the spot whence the household of the Hebrew leader had pitched their tent.—*Editor*.

replenished in the barren regions of the desert, the dread of famine, the horrible idea of themselves and families being consigned to a painful and lingering death overpowered their minds, and banished all other thoughts, insomuch that a universal mutiny broke out in the camp, the sounds of discontent were heard, not in low murmurs, but in loud and vehement complaints.* As their route through this plain lay directly eastward towards the defile of the mountains, they deviated a little out of the straight course, proceeding southwestward to this station; and it seems to have been with a special view to their being favoured with a fresh exhibition of divine power and goodness, which the Lord intended to give them there, that they were directed to move onward in a circuitous direction. Quails, birds of passage, migrate in immense flocks in the spring season over the peninsula of Arabia, and as their weight, which is about that of pigeons, soon exhausts them, and their flight is then generally determined by the direction of the wind, a cloud of these heavy birds was by cross winds wafted ashore, where their strength being spent, they fell in prodigious numbers close by the camp of Israel, and furnished them with a plentiful repast.†

* The reason of this extraordinary conduct, which is one of the most striking features of their life in the desert, must be sought for in the peculiar sensations to which the appetite is often subject in that barren region. Travellers who have penetrated it, and who have been accustomed formerly to a plentiful fare of animal food, often mention the extreme sufferings which they experience from the total want of it. To dream of banquets and tables of luxury, became absolutely a disease of their imaginations. And we can easily enter into the feelings of the Israelites, whose fancy was so often wandering amid the beautiful gardens that lined the banks of the Nile, and feasting on the superb melons, whose refreshing juice afforded them both meat and drink, and on the high-seasoned viands which crowned the tables of Egypt. But in them the indulgence of such regret and dissatisfaction was the blackest ingratitude; and if the peculiarities of their situation made it 'the sin that more easily beset them,' they might have striven the more anxiously to live in contentment with that provision, which, like all the other circumstances of this period of their history, was intended as the trial of their faith and patience.—*Editor*.

† Numbers xi. 31; Psalm cv. 40.

[Besides this miraculous supply of animal food, with which the special providence of their divine conductor seasonably provided the camp, every morning, precisely as Moses had predicted, a peculiar kind of bread descended in copious showers, which covered the ground. It was of a whitish colour, and called manna. A natural production of the same name is still to be met with in those desert regions, which distils from the branches of the tamarisk, is esteemed a delicacy by the natives, and capable of being kept for a year, which is done by those who are so fortunate as to gather it with great care, as it is only found after a wet season, an event of rare occurrence. This gum, which dissolves the moment the sun lights upon it, is consequently collected early in the morning, when congealed by the cold of night. It is described as somewhat aromatic and sweet as honey. It is supposed by Seetzen, Burckhardt, and others, to be the same substance as that on which the Israelites subsisted for so many years in the desert. So that according to this hypothesis of its being a natural production, the miracle consisted in the extraordinary and continuous supply of the manna, and in the arrangements which regulated its appearance in a double quantity, the day preceding, and its preservation in a state of freshness, during the continuance of the Sabbath. But other travellers, who have examined it more narrowly, and compared it with the Mosaic narrative, have pronounced this gum to be wanting in all the principal characteristics of the ancient manna.*

[After passing the boundary of the wilderness of Sin, the Israelites seem to have halted at two successive resting places, Dophkah and Alush, the sites of which it is impossible now to ascertain.† They were now approaching the lofty mountain barrier, and the region

* Exodus xvi. 14, 31; Numbers xi. 8, 9; Robinson's Biblical Researches, vol. i. p. 170.

† Numbers xxxiii. 12, 13.

through which the caravan travelled was rapidly changing its character from a succession of low broken plains of desert sand and stone, to an aspect of awfully wild and savage grandeur. In the quarter from which they approached, various defiles penetrate the interior of the mountains. 'In many of these,' says Pringle, 'the gorge is very narrow, and the rocks tower above or within to an immense height, resembling some parts of the Alps, or the pass of Glencoe in the Highlands, but utterly destitute of vegetation, and broken at every turn in an endless variety of fantastic slopes, with enormous blocks of granite rolled and tumbled over each other in rude confusion at the bottom, as if by the joint action of fire and water, and every here and there lateral defiles of a like wild and rugged character branch off, and penetrate in every direction.' These bleak and rugged masses of granite, which tower about a thousand feet in height, are thrown in wild confusion apparently placed as sentinels to guard the passes into the awful spot where the Almighty condescended to dwell with man on earth. The most common and direct route taken by travellers, is by Wadys Shellah and Mukattel, the latter of which is an object of peculiar interest, and a place of frequent resort, on account of the written characters inscribed on the rocky sides of the valley, the origin and meaning of which have hitherto equally baffled the investigations of the curious. The route pursued by the Israelites, however, seems to have been considerably farther to the north, that of Wady Feiran, in which, according to the Egyptian historian Makrisi, was the residence of the Amalekites, and which leads into Wady esh-Sheikh, 'one of the largest and most famous valleys of the peninsula,' which, after a long and circuitous course that winds around the outer hills of the Sinaitic cluster, conducts into a beautiful and spacious plain in the very centre of the range. Towards the opening of this extensive valley it is supposed that Rephidim was situated, where

the Amalekites engaged with Israel in one of those desultory skirmishes that have always characterized Arab warfare; and where, on the loud murmuring of the people, Moses was commanded to strike the rock, out of which gushed a miraculous stream of fresh water. Here there is still visible a large isolated granite rock, of a reddish colour, about six yards square, evidently a fragment of one of the Sinaitic cliffs;* one remarkable feature in the appearance of which is, that there are a great many parallel grooves, running along the breadth of the rock, and which are supposed to have been the fissures out of which the water gushed. This celebrated monument of antiquity has attracted the notice of many travellers, and formed the subject of eloquent descriptions. It is evident from the natural cavities that are distinctly visible, that water must have flowed from it at some period, but it may well be doubted, whether it is the identical rock that was smitten by Moses, as recent travellers have found several other rocks in the neighbourhood marked in an equally curious way, and consequently possessing equal claims to be regarded as the true Meribah, unless the authority of tradition be considered as decisive of the question.† The important fact of a spacious plain at the foot of Sinai, which, from monkish traditions, leads the genera-

* This rock is from its hardness styled 'the rock of flint.' Deut. viii. 15.—*Editor*.

† The reason of its being made to issue from a rock rather than from the ground, arose from the nature of the soil, which was strongly impregnated with salt, as well as from the course of their wanderings, extending over rocky and rugged places, and tracts of sand, so that it would have required an infinitely greater miracle to have kept it good, and at the same time following them (Deut. ix. 21; Ps. cv. 41; 1 Cor. x. 4) amid saltish and desert paths, which absorbed all moisture, than to bring it out of that part or other parts of the rock, around which they continued so long to wind. So that by this divine expedient, the water was preserved in its purity, a basins large enough were hollowed in the solid granite, out of which the vast multitude, both of men and beasts, could drink before the quality of the water was corrupted by coming into contact with the soil.—*Jamieson's Eastern Manners.—Editor*.

lity of travellers in one direction only, and which represses in many minds the exercise of independent observation and judgment, has lately come upon the world with all the interest of a new discovery ; and, as Dr Robinson, who deviated from the beaten track, and with a zeal that merits the highest commendation, carefully examined the spot with the Bible in his hand, has given a most clear and intelligible description of it, we cannot do better than quote that writer's account in his own words.

‘ It was half-past three o'clock when we reached the top from which the convent was said to be an hour distant ; but we found it two hours, as did also Burckhardt. Descending a little into a small wady, which has its head here, and runs off through a cleft in the western mountains, apparently to Wady Rûdhwâh, we soon began to ascend gradually in a course S.E. by S., passing by a small spring of good water ; beyond which the valley opens by degrees, and its bottom becomes less uneven. Here the interior and lofty peaks of the great circle of Sinai began to open upon us, black, rugged, desolate summits ; and, as we advanced, the dark and frowning front of Sinai itself (the present Horeb of the monks), began to appear. We were still gradually ascending, and the valley gradually opening, but as yet all was a naked desert. Afterwards a few shrubs were sprinkled round about, and a small encampment of black tents was seen on our right, with camels and goats browsing, and a few donkeys belonging to the convent. The scenery through which we had now passed reminded me strongly of the mountains around the Mer de Glace in Switzerland. I had never seen a spot more wild and desolate.

‘ As we advanced, the valley still opened wider and wider, with a gentle ascent, and became full of shrubs and tufts of herbs, shut in on each side by lofty granite ridges, with rugged shattered peaks a thousand feet high, while the face of Horeb arose directly before

us. Both my companion and myself involuntarily exclaimed, "Here is room enough for a large encampment." Reaching the top of the ascent, or water-shed, a fine broad plain lay before us, sloping down gently towards the S.S.E., enclosed by rugged and venerable mountains of dark granite, stern, naked splintered peaks and ridges of indescribable grandeur, and terminated, at the distance of more than a mile, by the bold and awful front of Horeb, rising perpendicularly in frowning majesty, from twelve to fifteen hundred feet in height. It was a scene of solemn grandeur wholly unexpected, and such as we had never seen; and the associations which at the moment rushed upon our minds were almost overwhelming. As we went on, new points of interest were continually opening on our view. On the left of Horeb, a deep and narrow valley runs up S.S.E., between lofty walls of rock, as if in continuation of the S.E. corner of the plain. In this valley, at the distance of near a mile from the plain, stands the convent, and the deep verdure of its fruit-trees and cypresses is seen as the traveller approaches—an oasis of beauty amid scenes of the sternest desolation. At the S.W. corner of the plain, the cliffs also retreat, and form a recess or open place, extending from the plain westward for some distance. From this recess there runs up a similar narrow valley, on the west of Horeb, called el-Leja, parallel to that in which the convent stands, and in it is the deserted convent, el-Arbâin, with a garden of olive and other fruit-trees, not visible from the plain. A third garden lies at the mouth of el-Leja, and a fourth farther west, in the recess just mentioned. The whole plain is called Wady er-Râhah, and the valley of the convent is known to the Arabs as Wady Shucib, that is the vale of Jethro. Still advancing, the front of Horeb rose like a wall before us; and one can approach quite to the foot, and *touch the mount*. Directly before its base is the deep bed of a torrent, by which, in the rainy season, the

waters of el-Leja, and the mountains around the recess, pass down eastward across the plain, forming the commencement of Wady-esh-Sheikh, which then crosses by an opening through the cliffs of the eastern mountain, a fine broad valley, affording the only easy access to the plain and convent. As we crossed the plain, our feelings were strongly affected at finding here so unexpectedly a spot so entirely adapted to the scriptural account of the giving of the law. No travellers have described this plain, nor even mentioned it, except in a slight and general manner, probably because they must have reached the convent by another route, without passing over it; and, perhaps, too, because neither the highest point of Sinai (now called Jibbel Mûsa), nor the still loftier summit of St Catharine, is visible from any part of it; we measured across the plain where we stood along the water-shed, and found the breadth to be at that point 2700 English feet, or 900 yards, though in some parts it is wider. The distance to the base of Horeb, measured in like manner, was 7000 feet, or 2333 yards. The northern slope of the plain north of where we stood, we judged to be somewhat less than a mile in length, by one-third of a mile in breadth. We may therefore fairly estimate the whole plain at two geographical miles long, and ranging in breadth from one-third to two-thirds of a mile; or, as equivalent to a surface of at least one square mile. This space is nearly doubled by the rivers so often mentioned on the west, and by the broad and level area of Wady Sheikh on the east, which issues at right angles to the plain, and is equally in view of the front and summit of the present Horeb. The examination of this afternoon convinced us, that here was space enough to satisfy all the requisites of the scripture narrative, so far as it relates to the assembling of the congregation to receive the law. Here, too, one can see the power of the injunction, to set bounds around the mount, that neither man nor beast might

approach too near.* The encampment before the mount might not improbably include only the head quarters of Moses and the elders, and of a portion of the people, while the remainder with their flocks were scattered among the adjacent hills.

‘ After ascending both peaks of Sinai, our feelings were greatly disappointed by Jibbel Mûsa, and we were confirmed in our opinion that Horeb, overlooking Er-Râhah, was the true Sinai. From this point, the whole plain, Er-Râhah, lay spread out beneath our feet with the adjacent wadys and mountains; while Wady-esh-Sheikh on the right, and the recess on the left, both connected with and opening broadly from Er-Râhah, presented an area, which serves nearly to double that of the plain. Our conviction was strengthened that here, or on some of the adjacent cliffs, was the spot where the Lord descended in fire and proclaimed the law. Here lay the plain where the whole congregation might be assembled; here was the mount that could be approached and touched, if not forbidden; and here the mountain brow, where alone the lightnings and the thick cloud would be visible, and the thunders and the voice of the trumpet be heard, when the Lord “came down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai.” ’†

[After an encampment for a year among the stupendous highlands of Sinai, the great religious object of their residence in that sequestered solitude having been accomplished, the Israelites, regularly organized as a military caravan, each tribe ranged under its respective banner and leader, and guided by the general assistance of Hobab, whose familiar acquaintance with life in the desert, made his presence an object of the greatest importance for showing them the bearings of the country, and conducting them to the resting places best fitted for the accommodations of shade and water,

* Exodus xix. 12.

† Robinson's Biblical Researches, vol. vi. p. 141.

set out on their way to Palestine. Their first encampment was at Taberah, three days' journey north-east of Sinai, and memorable for a fire that was attended with great damage to life and property.* Their second encampment was at Kibroth-hattaavah, a station that lay in the same northerly direction, beyond the wilderness of Sinai,† and the name of which was given to commemorate a fatal disaster which, in that place, by the righteous judgment of heaven, befel the people. Their third encampment was at Hazeroth, which they reached in five days' journey, by a slanting course to the shore of the gulf of Akaba, on which it is supposed by Robinson to have lain. This plain, famous for the mutiny that broke out in the family of Moses, and for the leprosy that excluded Miriam from the camp, that writer identifies with the spring Ainel-Hüdhera, whose site is close on the beach. 'The determination of this point,' says he, 'is of much more importance in biblical history than would at first appear; for such is the nature of the country that they must have gone by this route, and, once at this fountain, they could not have well varied their course so as to have kept aloof from the sea.' From this point in the passage along the shore, they entered the wilderness of Paran, and at Kadesh-barnea, which lay within its boundaries, and to which they travelled through the long valley of El-Arabah, Moses despatched spies to reconnoitre the land of Canaan. There, too, the people, dispirited and murmuring at their unfavourable report, were condemned to turn back and wander in the desert; a signal defeat was sustained from the Amalekites, and Korah's rebellion broke out.‡ Thirty-eight years they spent in various wanderings, though it is impossible from the little knowledge we possess of that part of the Arabian peninsula, to trace their

* Numbers xi. 3; Deut. ix. 22.

† Numbers xxxiii. 16.

‡ Numbers xiv. 33, 45; xvi.

course as yet with any pretence to accuracy.* And passing over the regular succession of stages, therefore, from inability to produce any satisfactory information, we shall mention only one or two places in their route remarkable chiefly for the incidents that took place, or the importance they afterwards acquired. Elath, now Ailah, and Ezion-geber, now el-Akaba, about twenty miles south of the former, two cities of Idumea, situated on the northern point of the eastern or Elanitic arm of the Red Sea, both of which became flourishing and important sea-ports in the reign of Solomon. At the latter station, that prince built his fleet that traded to Ophir ; and it was memorable at a subsequent period for the destruction of the shipping destined for the same distant expedition by Jehoshaphat, and his ally the idolatrous Ahaziah.† The vessels were wrecked on a ridge of rocks near the mouth of the harbour, from which the name Ezion-geber, signifying the backbone, was derived.]

Seir, whither Esau retired from the presence of his brother Jacob, was a mountainous country originally inhabited by the Horites, or Horims, the descendants of Hor or Hori, from whom the mountain was afterwards called mount Hor. It was on a mountain of this name, by the coasts of Edom, that Aaron died. It is therefore probable, that the whole tract was formerly called mount Hor ; since we find that the inhabitants were formerly called Horites. ‘ The Horims also dwelt in Seir before-time ; but the children of Esau succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead.’‡ Mount Hor, in the course of ages, exchanged its primitive appellation for Seir, the name of a distinguished Horite, probably the most powerful chieftain among those hardy moun-

* Burckhardt states with much regret, that the modern Arabic names which have entirely obliterated the Hebrew ones, render it impossible to ascertain many of the localities mentioned in the wanderings of the Israelites.—*Editor*.

† 1 Kings xxii. 48.

‡ Deuteronomy ii. 12.

taineers. This is no ideal personage; for Moses expressly mentions him, and enumerates his descendants in the close of the same chapter, where he gives us an account of the sons of Esau.* The country of Edom lay between the lake Asphaltites and the Arabian gulf. The sacred writer affirms, that it extended as far as the Red Sea:—‘And king Solomon made a navy of ships in Ezion-geber, which is beside Eloth, on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom.’† But if Ezion-geber was both on the shore of the Red Sea and in the land of Edom, the dominions of Esau must have extended to the Arabian gulf. This, in the opinion of Dr Wells, is the true reason that the Arabian gulf came to have the name of the Red Sea; which means no more than the sea of Edom, or Idumean Sea. As this country was called the land of Edom, from Esau, who for selling his birth-right for some red pottage, was named Edom, which, in the Hebrew tongue, signifies *red*; so, from the country, as is usual, the adjoining sea took the name of the sea of Edom.‡ Beyond mount Seir to the westward, runs a ridge of mountains, which separates Canaan from Arabia, and which seems to be denoted in Scripture by the name of the mountain of the Amorites; some of whose branches run up northward to Hebron.

Abarim, a mountainous range between the rivers Arnon and Jordan,—on Nebo or Pisgah, from one of the loftiest peaks of which Moses enjoyed a distant prospect of the land of Promise. One part of these mountains, or hills, was distinguished by the names of mount Nebo and Pisgah. God said unto Moses, ‘Get thee up into this mountain Abarim, unto mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, over against Jericho.’§ And that this was the same as mount Pisgah, from whose summit Moses obtained a sight of the promised

* Genesis xxxvi. 20.

† 1 Kings ix. 26.

‡ Wells’ Historical Geography, vol. i. p. 188.

§ Deuteronomy xxxii. 49.

land, and where he terminated a career of greater glory than ever fell to the lot of any fallen mortal, may be inferred from the following words :—‘ And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountains of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah that is over against Jericho.’* From this account it seems probable, that Pisgah was the highest pinnacle of Nebo, a mountain in the great range of Abarim ; for the term Pisgah may be derived from a root which signifies to *elevate or raise up* : and therefore may justly denote the top or the loftiest peak of that mountain. But, on the other hand, Eusebius has observed that Aquila who translated the Bible into Greek, uniformly rendered the Hebrew word Pisgah, by a Greek word signifying *cut out* ; and that the Seventy interpreters in some places rendered it after the same manner. Whence some conjecture, that in one part of mount Nebo, steps were cut out in order to facilitate the ascent ; and that this part more properly bore the name of Pisgah. But those who favour this opinion, have not been able to produce any Hebrew root, which might warrant the version of these celebrated interpreters ; and it is more natural to suppose, that this particular summit owed its name to its great elevation, and the extensive prospect which it commanded. The conjecture certainly receives some countenance, from the circumstance that Moses was directed to take his station on that part of the mountain, for the purpose of viewing the promised land.

Eusebius and Jerome informs us, that some part of this ridge of mountains that was seen as one went up from Livies to Esbus, or Heshbon, retained the old name of Abarim so late as their times ; and that the part peculiarly called mount Nebo, was over against Jericho, not far from Jordan, and six miles west from Esbus.†

[The extensive view which this elevated spot com-

* Deuteronomy xxxiv. 1.

† Wells' Historical Geography, vol. i. p. 285.

manded, is well shown in the following eloquent passage of Milman:—‘From the top of Mount Abarim or Nebo, the former of which names may perhaps be traced in Djebel Attarous, the highest point in the district, the lawgiver, whose eyes were not yet dimmed, and who had suffered none of the infirmities of age, might survey a large tract of country: To the right lay the mountain pastures of Gilead, the romantic district of Bashan, the windings of Jordan might be traced along its broad and level valley, till almost beneath his feet it flowed into the Dead Sea. To the north spread the luxuriant plains of Esdraelon, the more hilly, yet fruitful country of Lower Galilee. Right opposite stood the city of Jericho, embowered in its groves of palms, beyond it the mountains of Judea, rising above each other till they reached the sea. Gazing on this magnificent prospect, beholding in prophetic anticipation his great and happy commonwealth occupying its numerous towns and blooming fields, Moses breathed his last. The place of his burial was unknown, lest perhaps the impious gratitude of his followers might ascribe divine honours to his name, and assemble to worship at his sepulchre.’*

[Arabia Deserta lay along the base of the Chaldean mountains, and was bounded on the east by Chaldea and Babylonia, on the west by Syria and Arabia Petræa, on the south by Arabia Felix, and on the north by the Euphrates. The Esitæ,—a people whom some writers imagine to be the inhabitants of Uz, the native country of Job,—the Edomites, Nabathæans, and the people of Kedar, were the nomadic races of chief note by whom this region was occupied. The celebrated Palmyra, supposed to be Solomon’s Tadmor in the wilderness, was their principal city.

[Arabia Felix was bounded on the north by the two divisions of Arabia described above, and on the other

* History of the Jews, vol. i. p. 159.

sides by the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean, and the Persian gulf. The descendants of Abraham by Keturah and the Sabæans, were the only people noticed in Scripture who inhabited this part of Arabia.

[*Civil History.*—The Arabs, inheriting the character of Ishmael their progenitor, have in all ages led a wandering life. Devoted to a nomadic condition, we need not wonder that many of the notices taken of them in Scripture, refer to their peculiar way of life, and that they paid into the treasury of Jehoshaphat a yearly tribute of 7700 rams, and the same number of goats.* Their marauding habits have naturally provoked against them the hostility of other nations; and subsisting as they have done for many successive ages, there is scarcely a single people who have figured in the history of the ancient world, that has not by turns directed its arms against this turbulent race. But amid all the efforts made to subdue them, they have retained to this hour their national independence; so that their past history and their present condition is a remarkable commentary on the truth and fulfilment of the ancient prediction of their founder,—‘their hand is against every man, and every man’s hand against them.’

* 2 Chron. xvii. 11.

CHAPTER VII.

PALESTINE.

CANAAN, or Palestine, is entitled to particular consideration on many accounts; but chiefly because it was the residence of the chosen seed, and the theatre of our redemption.

When the Maker of heaven and earth appointed to the nations their inheritance, the country which is bounded on the west by the Mediterranean; on the east by the river Jordan, the lake Asphaltites and the sea of Tiberias; on the north by the mountain Antilibanus; and on the south by Idumea, fell to the lot of Canaan, one of the sons of Ham. It extends about two hundred miles in length, and eighty in breadth. It is situated between 31° and 34° north latitude, and 35° and 36° east longitude. From the grandson of Noah, who, in the opinion of the Orientals, migrated from Arabia, and the shores of the Red Sea, into that region,* it was first called the land of Canaan. It has since been distinguished by other names, as the land of Promise; the Holy Land; Judea, from the tribe of Judah, which possessed its finest and most fertile division; and Palestine, from the Philistines, by whom a great part of it was inhabited. Although not half so large as England, and situated in a very warm climate, it surpassed all other

* Michaelis Spicil. part i. p. 169.

LAND OF ISRAEL.

Scale of Geographical Miles.
0 10 20

TRIBES.

- I REUBEN, II GAD,
III EAST HALF OF MANASSEH,
IV NAPHTALI, V ASHER,
VI ZEBULON, VII ISSACHAR,
VIII WEST HALF OF MANASSEH,
IX EPHRAIM, X BENJAMIN,
XI DAN, XII SIMEON,
XIII JUDAH.

The 6 Cities of Refuge marked thus **HEBRON** & **BEETHAN** are shown thus, **Bethany**, **ITUREA**.

G R E E K
M E D I T E R R A N E A N

A M M O N
I D I A N



Longitude East 35° from Greenwich

countries in fertility and pleasantness. Abounding with the most delicious fruits and choicest grains; diversified with beautiful hills, plains, and valleys; enriched with fountains and brooks of excellent water; adorned with delightful groves and forests; crowded with populous towns and wealthy cities; blest with a sweet and salubrious temperature, and placed in the very centre of the earth, from whence the light of true religion might radiate into every part of the world, it was assigned by Jehovah for the habitation of his chosen people, where redeeming love was to put forth all its glories.

Physical Geography.—Palestine is in general a mountainous country; even the whole of Syria, of which the Holy Land is reckoned a part, is in some degree a chain of mountains, branching off in various directions, from one great and leading ridge. Whether the traveller approach it from the sea, or from the immense plains of the desert, he beholds at a great distance, a lofty and clouded chain running north and south as far as the eye can reach; and as he advances, sees the tops of the mountains sometimes detached, and sometimes united in ridges, uniformly terminating in one great line, towering above them all. This line, which extends without interruption from its entry by the north quite into Arabia, runs at first close to the sea, between Alexandretta and the Orontes; and after opening a passage to that river, proceeds to the southward, quitting for a short distance the shore, and in a chain of summits stretches as far as the sources of the Jordan; where it divides into branches, to enclose as it were in a capacious basin, this river and its three lakes. During its course a countless number of branches separate from the main trunk, some of which are lost in the desert, where they form various enclosed hollows, as those of Damascus and Haran; while others advance towards the sea, where they sometimes end in steep declivities as at Carmel, or Nekoura, or by a gentle descent sink

into the plains of Antioch and Tripoli, of Tyre and Acre.*

Such is the general appearance of the country which Moses taught his people to expect, while they traversed the burning and dreary wilderness:—‘For the land whither thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot as a garden of herbs; but the land whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven.’† The striking contrast, in this short but glowing description, between the land of Egypt, where the people of Israel had so long and cruelly suffered, and the inheritance promised to their fathers, where Jehovah reserved for them and their children every blessing that a nation can desire, must have made a deep impression upon their minds. In Egypt, the eye is fatigued with wandering over an immense flat plain, intersected with stagnant canals, and studded with mud-walled towns and cottages; seldom refreshed by a single shower; exhibiting, for three months, the singular spectacle of an extensive sheet of water, from which the towns and villages that are built upon the higher grounds, are seen like islands in the midst of the ocean—marshy and rank with vegetation for three others—and parched and dusty the remainder of the year. They had seen a population of naked and sun-burnt peasants, tending their buffaloes, or driving their camels, or sheltering themselves from the overwhelming heat beneath the shade of the thinly scattered date or sycamore trees; below, natural or artificial lakes, cultivated fields, and vacant grounds of considerable extent—overhead, a burning sun, darting his oppressive rays from an azure sky, almost invariably free from clouds. In that ‘weary

* Volney's Travels in Syria and Egypt, vol. i. p. 202, Per. h edition.
Hasselquist's Travels, pp. 126, 127.

† Deut. xi. 11.

land,' they were compelled to water their corn fields with the foot; a painful and laborious employment, rendered necessary by the want of rain. Those vegetable productions which require a greater quantity of moisture than is furnished by the periodical inundations of the Nile, they were obliged to refresh with water drawn out of the river by machinery, and lodged afterwards in capacious cisterns. When the melons, sugar-canes, and other vegetables that are commonly disposed in rills, required to be refreshed, they struck out the plugs which are fixed in the bottom of the cisterns; and then the water gushing out, is conducted from one rill to another by the husbandman, who is always ready, as occasion requires, to stop and divert the torrent, by turning the earth against it with his foot, opening at the same time with his mattock a new trench to receive it.* Such is the practice to which Moses alludes; and it continues to be observed without variation to this day. But from this fatiguing uniformity of surface, and toilsome method of watering their grounds, the people of Israel were now to be relieved; they were going to possess a land of hills and valleys, clothed with woods—beautified and enriched with fountains of water—divided by rivers, streams, and brooks, flowing cool and pure from the summits of their mountains—and, with little attention from the cultivator, exciting the secret powers of vegetation, and scattering plenty wherever they came. The highlands, which are not cultivated by irrigation, are to this day more prized in the East than those which must be watered by means of dykes and canals; both because it requires no labour, which in the low country is necessary, to watch the progress of the water through the channels, in order to give it a proper direction, and because every elevation produces an agreeable change of temperature, where the hills dis-

* Shaw's Travels, vol. ii p. 267.

play the loveliness of paradise, while the plains are burnt up with insufferable heat.*

Sometimes the drought of summer renders frequent waterings necessary even in Judea. On such occasions, the water is drawn up from the wells by oxen, and carried by the inhabitants in earthen jars, to refrigerate their plantations on the sides of the hills.† The necessity to which the Jewish husbandman is occasionally reduced, to water his grounds in this manner, is not inconsistent with the words of Moses which distinguish the Holy Land from Egypt, by its drinking rain from heaven, while the latter is watered by the foot. The inspired prophet alludes, in that passage, not to gardens of herbs, or other cultivated spots on the steep declivities of the hills and mountains, where, in so warm a climate as that of Canaan, the deficiency of rain must be supplied by art, but to their corn fields, which, in Egypt, are watered by artificial canals, in the manner just described; in Canaan by the rain of heaven.

The lands of Egypt, it must be granted, are supplied with water by the overflowing of the Nile, and are so saturated with moisture, that they require no more watering for the producing of corn, and several other vegetables; while the gardens require fresh supplies every three or four days.‡ But then it is to be remembered, that immense labour was requisite to conduct the waters of the river to many of their lands; and those works of the ancient kings of Egypt, by which they distributed the streams of the Nile through their whole country, are celebrated by Maillet, as the most magnificent and the most admirable of all their undertakings; and those labours which they caused their subjects undergo, doubtless were designed to prevent much heavier fatigues, to which they must otherwise

* Morier's Travels in Persia, vol. i. p. 295.

† Pococke's Travels, vol. ii. p. 61.

‡ Maillet, Description de l'Égypte, Let. ii. p. 45.

have submitted. The words of Moses, addressed to the people of Israel, probably contained a significancy and force of which we can form but a very imperfect idea, and which has not of late been at all understood. Maillet was assured, that the large canal which filled the cisterns of Alexandria, and is at least fifteen leagues long, was entirely paved, and its sides were lined with brick, which were as perfect as in the days of the Romans. If bricks were used in the construction of their more ancient canals,—a supposition extremely probable; and if those made by the people of Israel were designed for purposes of this kind,—they must have heard with a peculiar satisfaction, that the country to which they were going required no canals to be dug, no bricks to be prepared for paving and lining them, in order to water it,—labours which had so greatly embittered their lives in Egypt. This idea is favoured by the account which Moses gives of their former servitude: hard bondage, in mortar and brick, is joined with other services of the field,* among which may be numbered the digging and cleansing of their canals; and in this view, the mortar and brick are very naturally joined with those laborious and standing operations.

The surface of Canaan is as diversified as the face of Egypt is uniform.† Skirted with plains of moderate extent, and separated by narrow vales, the mountains continually change their forms and appearance with their levels and situation. The forests with which some of them are crowned; the woods which adorn the plains and sides of the hills, where the fir, the larch, and the oak, the box, the laurel, the myrtle, and the yew, mingle their various foliage; the streams

* Exodus i. 14.

† 'The whole of the scenery,' says Richardson, 'since we entered Palestine, amply confirms the language of Scripture, that this is a land flowing with milk and honey—a land for flocks, and herds, and bees, and fitted for the residence of men whose trade, like the patriarchs of old, was in cattle.'—*Travels*, vol. ii. p. 375.

of cool and limpid water that precipitate themselves from the rocks, or trickle down the narrow vales to refresh the parched fields in their way to the sea,—produce an air of liveliness which delights the traveller, wearied and disgusted with the melancholy nakedness of Egypt. On some declivities he meets with cottages, even in its present state of desolation, surrounded with fig-trees and vineyards; and the sight, observes a modern writer, repays the fatigue of a road, which, by rugged paths, conducts him from the bottom of the valleys to the summits of the mountains. The inferior branches, which extend to the northward of Aleppo, present, on the contrary, nothing but naked rocks, without verdure and without soil. Southward of Antioch, and on the sea-coast, the sides of the hills are adapted to the cultivation of the vine and the olive. Mount Casius, however, which rises above Antioch to an immense height, must be excepted. On the side of the desert, the summits and declivities of this chain exhibit almost one series of white rocks, where the aching eye of the wanderer can scarcely discover a single spot of verdure, on which it may repose. ‘Towards Lebanon the mountains are high, but covered in many places with as much earth as fits them for cultivation. Among the crags of the rocks, the beautiful and far-famed cedar waves its lofty top, and extends its powerful arms, surrounded by the fir and the oak, the fig and the vine. On the road to Jerusalem, the mountains are not so lofty nor so rugged, but become fitter for tillage. They rise again to the south-east of mount Carmel; are covered with woods, and afford very picturesque views: but advancing toward Judea they lose their verdure,—the valleys become narrow, dry, and stony, and terminate at the Dead Sea in a pile of desolate rocks, precipices, and caverns. These vast excavations, some of which will contain fifteen hundred men, are the grottoes of Engeddi, which have been a refuge to the oppressed or

the discontented in all ages. Westward of Jordan and the lake Asphaltites, another chain of rocks, still loftier and more rugged, presents a yet more gloomy aspect, and announces the distant entrance of the desert, and the termination of the habitable regions.*

Mountains.—The most remarkable mountains in Palestine, are those of Lebanon, so frequently celebrated in the holy Scriptures. This lofty range, described by ancient and modern historians under the names of Libanus and Antilibanus,† is the highest point of all Syria, and serves equally as a boundary to Judea and Assyria, extending in a parallel direction from the vicinity of Damascus on the east to that of Sidon on the west; the western ridge being called Libanus, and the eastern Antilibanus; while the interjacent plain is called Cœle-Syria, or the Valley of Lebanon;‡ but so frequent mention is made of them in the writings of the prophets, that they are generally included within the confines of the land of Promise. ‘The western chain,’ to use the words of Volney, ‘properly commences at Mount Casius, a lofty peak to the south of Antioch, which shoots up to the heavens its needle-like point, encircled with forests. From this peak the same chain, under various appellations, winds along the shore of the Mediterranean, from which it is seldom distant above twenty miles, till it reaches the most elevated part between Tripoli and Acre (which is the Lebanon Proper of Scripture). At the head of the Valley of Balbec (the entering in of Hamath), this chain becomes connected with the more eastern by a lateral range shutting up the valley. Antilibanus, the eastern ridge, runs 200 miles northward, and is now known by the name of the Ansarian Mountains. They reach the highest ele-

* Volney's Trav. vol. i. pp. 203, 204.

† Now Jebel Libnan and Jebel-esh-shurky, or the East Mountain.—*Editor.*

‡ Joshua xi. 17.

vation to the south-east of Tripoli; and their towering summits capped with clouds, are discerned at the distance of thirty leagues. The superior height of Lebanon is ascertained by the course of the rivers. 'The Orontes, flowing from the mountains of Damascus, loses itself below Antioch; the Kasmia which, north of Balbec, shapes its course towards Tyre; the Jordan, forced by the declivities toward the south,—prove this to be the highest point. Next to Lebanon, the highest part of the country is mount Akkar, which becomes visible as soon as the traveller leaves Marra in the desert. It appears like an immense flattened cone, and is constantly seen for two days' journey. The height of these mountains has not been ascertained by the barometer; but we may deduce it from a circumstance mentioned by every traveller who visits the land of Promise. In winter their tops are entirely covered with snow, from Alexandretta to Jerusalem, but after March it melts, except on mount Lebanon; where, however, it does not continue the whole year, unless in the highest cavities, and towards the north-east, where it is sheltered from the sea breezes, and the rays of the sun.' In this situation, Volney saw it at the very time he complains of being nearly suffocated with heat in the valley of Balbec. On the 10th of June Dr Richardson found the snow lying only in patches, and melting so fast, that in a few days, he had no doubt, the sun would gild the surface of the naked mountains.* Now, since it is fully ascertained that snow in this latitude requires an elevation of fifteen or sixteen hundred fathoms, we may conclude that to be the height of Lebanon. It is therefore much lower than the Alps, or even than the Pyrenees: Mount Blanc, the loftiest of the Alps, is estimated at two thousand four hundred fathoms above the level of the sea; and the peak of Ossian in the Pyrenees, at nineteen hundred.†

* Travels, vol. ii. p. 151.

† Volney's Travels, vol. i. p. 205.

Lebanon, which gives its name to the extensive range of the Kesrauan, and the country of the Druses, presents to the traveller every where majestic mountains, some of which are crowned with eternal snows, and have their sides furrowed with a thousand channels, where the cold flowing streams are continually pouring down into the vale. At every step, he meets with scenes in which Nature displays beauty or grandeur, sometimes romantic wildness, but always variety. The sublime elevation and steep ascent of this magnificent rampart, which seems to enclose the country,—the gigantic masses which shoot into the clouds,—inspire him with astonishment and reverence. Should he scale those summits which bounded his view, and ascend the highest point of Lebanon, distinguished by the name of the Sannin, the immensity of space which expands around him, ‘ becomes a fresh subject of admiration.’ On every side he beholds a horizon without bounds ; whilst, in clear weather, the sight is lost over the desert, which extends to the Persian gulf, and over the sea, which washes the coasts of Europe. ‘ He seems to command the whole world ; while the wandering eye, now surveying the successive chains of mountains, transports the mind in one instant from Antioch to Jerusalem ; and now, approaching the surrounding objects, observes the distant profundity of the coast, till the attention, at last fixed by distincter objects, more minutely examines the rocks, the woods, the torrents, the sloping sides of the hills, the villages and the towns ; and the mind secretly exults at the diminution of objects which formerly appeared so great. He sees the valleys obscured by stormy clouds, with fresh delight, and smiles at hearing the thunder, which so often bursts over his head, growling beneath his feet ; while the threatening summits of the mountains are diminished, till they appear like the furrows of a ploughed field, or the steps of an amphitheatre, and he feels himself gratified by an elevation above so many lofty objects,

on which he now looks down with inward satisfaction.*

Perhaps no spot on the globe can present a spectacle so glorious as that which is unfolded from the apex of mount Lebanon. A boundless horizon, glowing and radiant, is spread out before the view, and the eye expatiates almost without interruption from the waters of the Mediterranean to the confines of the Persian gulf. On such a scene the spectator loses for a while all sense of individual weakness ; his faculties feel as it were an enlarged vitality, and he dwells with a rapturous delight on the splendours by which he is encompassed, till their united glories torture the imagination, and the sense aches with gazing.†

‘ On visiting the interior parts of these mountains,’ says Volney, ‘ the roughness of the roads, the steep descents and precipices, strike’ the traveller ‘ at first with terror ; but the sagacity of the mule which he rides, the only beast of burden which can traverse them with safety, soon relieves him, and he calmly surveys those picturesque scenes that entertain him in quick succession. There he travels whole days together, to reach a place which was in sight at his departure ; he winds, descends, skirts the hills, and climbs their precipitous sides ; and in this perpetual change, it seems as if magic herself varied for him at every step the decorations of the scenery. Sometimes he sees villages gliding from the steep declivities on which they are built, and so arranged, that the terraces of one row of houses, serve as a street to those above them. Sometimes he sees the habitation of a recluse, standing on a solitary height ; here a rock, perforated by a torrent, and become a natural arch ; there another rock, worn perpendicular, resembles a high wall. On the sides of the hills, he frequently sees beds of stones, uncovered

* Volney's Travels, vol. i. p. 203; see also De Tott's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 336.

† Letters from Palestine, p. 117.

and detached by the waters, rising up like artificial ruins. In many places, the waters meeting with inclined beds, have excavated the intermediate earth, and formed caverns; in others, subterraneous channels are formed, through which flow rivulets for a part of the year. These subterraneous rivulets are common throughout Syria; they are found near Damascus, at the sources of the Orontes, and at those of the Jordan. That of Mar-Hanna, near the village of Shouair, opens by a gulf called *El-baloisa*, or the Swallower. It is an aperture of about ten feet wide, in the middle of a hollow; at the depth of fifteen feet is a sort of first bottom, but it only hides a very profound lateral opening. Some years' before Volney visited Lebanon, 'it was shut, as it had served to conceal a murder. The winter rains coming on, the waters collected and formed a pretty deep lake; but some small streams penetrating among the stones, they were soon stripped of the earth which fastened them, and the pressure of the mass of water prevailing, the whole obstacle was removed with an explosion like thunder; and the re-action of the compressed air was so violent, that a column of water spouted up, and fell upon a house at the distance of at least two hundred paces. The current this occasioned, formed a whirlpool, which swallowed up the trees and vines planted in the hollow, and threw them out by the second aperture.' *

'These picturesque situations often become tragical. By thaws and earthquakes, rocks have been known to lose their equilibrium, roll down on the neighbouring houses, and bury the inhabitants. This happened about twenty years' before Volney's visit, 'when a fragment of the mountain, slipping from its base, overwhelmed a whole village, without leaving a single trace where it formerly stood. Still more lately, and near the same place,' says that traveller, 'the entire side of a hill, covered with mulberries and vines, was

* Volney's Travels, vol. i. p. 208.

detached by a sudden thaw, and sliding down the rock, was launched, like a ship from the stocks, into the valley. It might be supposed, that such accidents would disgust the inhabitants of those mountains; but, besides that these happen seldom, they are compensated by an advantage, which makes the people prefer their perilous habitations to the most stable and fertile plains,—the security they enjoy from the oppressions of the Turks. This security is esteemed so great a blessing by the inhabitants, that they have discovered an industry on these rocks, which we may elsewhere expect in vain. By mere art and labour, they have fertilized a rocky soil. Sometimes to gain the water, they conduct it by a thousand windings along the declivities, or stop it by dams in the valleys; while in other places, they support the ground, ready to crumble down, by walls and terraces. Almost all these mountains, cultivated in this manner, have the appearance of a flight of stairs, or an amphitheatre, every step of which is a row of vines or mulberry trees.’ Our author ‘computed from an hundred to an hundred and twenty of these gradations on the same declivity.’* In many places, their summits are flattened and stretched into vast plains, which reward the toil of the cultivator with luxuriant crops of corn and all kinds of pulse. Numerous rivulets of excellent water intersect these elevated regions, and diffuse on every side the richest verdure. The soil which covers the declivities, and the narrow valleys which separate them, is extremely fertile, and produces in abundance corn, wine, and oil, which D’Arvieux pronounces the best in Syria.†

These mountains ‘consist of a hard, calcareous, whitish stone, sonorous like free-stone, and disposed in strata variously inclined.’‡ This stone has nearly the

* Volney’s Travels, vol. i. p. 210; Dr Richardson’s Travels, vol. ii. pp. 383, 404, 405.

† Travels in Palestine, p. 80, &c.

‡ Shaw’s Travels, vol. ii. p. 153.

same appearance in every part of Syria : sometimes it is quite bare and peeled ; such, for instance, is that of the hills on the north side of the road from Antioch to Aleppo, and that which serves as a bed to the upper part of the rivulet, which passes by the latter city. In travelling from Aleppo to Hama, veins of the same rock are constantly to be met with in the plain ; while the mountains on the right present huge piles, which appear like the ruins of towns and castles. The same stone, under a more regular form, likewise composes the greater part of Lebanon, Anti-Lebanon, the mountains of the Druzes, Galilee, and mount Carmel, and stretches to the south of the lake Asphaltites. The inhabitants every where build their houses, and make lime with it. Of this beautiful stone was the temple of Jehovah built, and the other splendid edifices with which Solomon adorned the capital of his kingdom. He ' had threescore and ten thousand that bare burdens, and fourscore hewers in the mountains. . . . And the king commanded, and they brought great stones, costly stones, and hewed stones, to lay the foundations of the house. And Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders did hew them, and the stone-squarers.' *

Volney never heard that these stones contained any petrified shells in the upper regions of Lebanon : but he found between Batroun and Djebail, in the Kes-raouan, not far from the sea, a quarry of Schistus stones, the flakes of which bear the impressions of plants, fish, shells, and particularly the sea onion. The bed of the torrent of Askalon in Palestine, is also lined with a heavy stone, porous and salt, which contains many small volutes and bivalves of the Mediterranean. Pococke found a large quantity of them in the rocks which border on the Dead Sea. These are indubitable remains of the antediluvian world, and afford an additional proof, if any were needed, of the existence

* 1 Kings v. 15, 17, 18.

and prevalence of the deluge over the surface of our globe.

Iron is the only mineral which abounds in these mountains, and is found in those of Kesraouan, and of the Druzes in great abundance. Every summer the inhabitants work those mines, which are simply ochreous. Report says, there was anciently a copper mine near Aleppo, which Volney thinks must have been long since abandoned: he was also informed by the Druzes, that in the declivity of the hill formerly mentioned, a mineral was discovered which produced both lead and silver; but as such a discovery would have proved the ruin of the whole district, by attracting the attention of the Turks, they quickly destroyed every vestige of it.* These statements establish the accuracy of Moses, in the account which he gave his nation of the promised inheritance:—‘A land whose stones are iron, and out of whose mountains thou mayst dig brass.’† A different temperature prevails in different parts of these mountains; hence, the expression of the Arabian poets, That Lebanon bears winter on his head, spring upon his shoulders, and autumn in his bosom, while summer lies sleeping at his feet.

In the year 1574, Dr Rauwolf visited Lebanon; he proceeded from Tripoli with the patriarch of the Maronites, and walked through plantations of olive trees, which extend all the way to the foot of the mountain, through pleasant vineyards, and fields sown with barley and millet. As they passed through the woods, they were entertained with the songs of a variety of birds, and saw the hart bounding among the trees. Near the mountain were several villages, where they were regaled with wine, the produce of the mountain; it was white, and our author declares, better than any he had ever tasted. The sides of the mountain were moistened with numerous rills; and the heights were crowned

* Volney's Travels, vol. i. p. 211.

† Deut. viii. 9.

with trees of various kinds, among which he noticed the vine, two species of dwarf cedar, mingled with the styrax tree, which produces a fragrant gum, and sheds around it a refreshing odour. They ascended the mountain by a winding path cut into steps. From the top of the monastery, where the patriarch who accompanied him resided, he saw towards the east, the snowy peak of the Sannin towering above the cedars. The cedar is called the glory of Lebanon, and several of patriarchal longevity still remain to attest the authenticity of Scripture. Of these celebrated trees he found only twenty-four nearly in a circle, and two decayed with age. They are evergreens, have long stems, several fathoms in girth, and are, says Rauwolf, as high as our fir trees; they have very large arms, which bend the trunk, and injure the beauty of the tree; their branches shoot up straight, on which the cones, which are large and round, are placed perpendicularly, disposed in rows at equal distances, with great regularity. These circumstances distinguish the appearance of the tree from that of all other firs, else it would very much resemble the larch, especially in the leaf.*

Rather more than a century afterwards, Mr Maundrell visited the mountains of Lebanon. Having proceeded about half an hour through the olive yards of Sidon, he and his party came to the foot of mount Libanus. They had an easy ascent for two hours, after which it grew more steep and difficult; in about an hour and a half more, they came to a fountain of water, where they encamped for the night. Next day, after ascending for three hours, they reached the highest ridge of the mountain, where the snow lay by the side of the road. They began immediately to descend on the other side, and in two hours came to a small village, where a fine brook, gushing at once from the side of the mountain, rushes down into the valley below, and

* Travels, p. 207.

after flowing about two leagues, loses itself in the river Letane. The valley is called Bocat, and seems to be the same with the Bicath-Aven of the prophet;* 'I will break also the bar of Damascus, and cut off the inhabitant from the plain (rather the vale) of Aven, and him that holdeth the sceptre from the house of Eden.' The neighbourhood of Damascus, and particularly a place near it, which, in the time of Maundrell, still bore the name of Eden, render his conjecture extremely probable. It might also have the name of Aven, which signifies vanity, from the idolatrous worship of Baal practised at Balbec or Heliopolis, which is situated in this valley.†

The beauties of Lebanon seem to have left a deeper impression in the mind of D'Arvieux. 'After travelling six hours in pleasant valleys,' says that writer, 'and over mountains covered with different species of trees, we entered a small plain, on a fertile hill wholly covered with walnut trees and olives, in the middle of which is the village of Eden.—In spite of my weariness, I could not but incessantly admire this beautiful country. It is truly an epitome of the terrestrial paradise, of which it bears the name. Eden is rather a hamlet than a village. The houses are scattered, and separated from each other by gardens, which are enclosed by walls made of stones piled up without mortar.'‡

'We quitted Eden about eight o'clock in the morning, and advanced to mountains so extremely high, that we seemed to be travelling in the middle regions

* Amos i. 5.

† Maundrell's Journey, vol. i. pp. 48, 49.

‡ Trav. p. 80. Dr Richardson proceeded from Damascus to visit Lebanon. After three hours travelling, he came to a very picturesque and remarkable pass called Sook, where the road is narrowed by the approach of the mountains on each side of the river (Barrady) and excavations are cut in the rock, on the right-hand side, in places that seemed quite inaccessible without the help of a scaling ladder, or a basket. Some of the doors are formed with great care, and have buttresses on each side, and statues between them.—*Travels*, vol. ii. p. 500.

of the atmosphere. Here the sky was clear and serene above us, while we saw below us, thick clouds dissolving in rain and watering the plains.'

'After three hours of laborious travelling, we arrived at the famous cedars about eleven o'clock. We counted twenty-three of them. The circumference of these trees is thirty-six feet.'

'The bark of the cedar resembles that of the pine. The stem is upright, the wood is hard, and has the reputation of being incorruptible. The leaves are long, narrow, rough, very green, ranged in tufts along the branches; they shoot in spring, and fall in the beginning of winter. Its flowers and fruit resemble those of the pine. From the full grown trees, a fluid trickles naturally, and without incision; this is clear, transparent, whitish, and after a time dries and hardens: it is supposed to possess great virtues. The place where these great trees are stationed, is a plain of nearly a league in circumference; on the summit of a mount which is environed almost on all sides by other mounts, so high that their summits are always covered with snow. This plain is level, the air is pure, the heaven is always serene. On one side of this plain is a frightful precipice, from whence flows a copious stream, which, descending into the valley, forms a considerable part of the Holy river, or *Nahar Kadisha*. The view along this valley is interesting; and the crevices of the rocks are filled with earth of so excellent a quality, that trees grow in them; and being continually refreshed with the vapours rising from the streams below, attain to considerable dimensions. Nor is the sense of smelling less gratified than that of sight, by the fragrance diffused from the odoriferous plants around.'

He afterwards says, 'the banks of the river appeared enchanted. This stream is principally formed by the source which issues below the cedars, but is continually augmented by a prodigious number of rills and fountains, which fall from the mountain, gliding along the

clefts of the rocks, and forming many charming natural cascades, which communicate cooling breezes, and banish the idea of being in a country subject to extreme heat. If to these enjoyments we add that of the nightingale's song, it must be granted that these places are infinitely agreeable.'

The cedars which he visited, encircle the region of perpetual snow. Lebanon is in this part free from rocks, and only rises and falls with small easy unevennesses, but is perfectly barren and desolate. The ground, where not concealed by the snow, for several hours riding appeared to be covered with a sort of white slates, thin and smooth. Yet these dreary summits are not without their use; they serve as a conservatory for abundance of snow, which, thawing in the heat of summer, furnishes ample supplies of water to the rivers and fountains in the valleys below. In the snow, he saw the prints of the feet of several wild beasts, which are the sole proprietors of these upper parts of the mountain. Maundrell found only sixteen cedars of large growth, and a natural plantation of smaller ones, which were very numerous. One of the largest was twelve yards six inches in girth, and thirty-seven yards in the spread of its boughs. At six yards from the ground, it was divided into five limbs, each equal to a great tree.*

[' Tradition asserts,' says Carne, ' and the people believe, that these venerable trees are the remains of the forest that furnished timber for Solomon's temple three thousand years ago. It is certain that they were very ancient even several years ago; two centuries since they were twenty-five in number.' Pococke, a century ago, found fifteen standing, and the sixteenth was recently blown down. Burckhardt in 1800 counted eleven or twelve; they are now but seven, and these are of so prodigious a size,—of an appearance so massive and imperishable, that it is easy to believe they actually

* Maundrell's Travels, p. 142.

existed in biblical times. Those which have fallen during the last two centuries, have perished through extreme age and decay, while the occasional violence of the winds probably contributed to the fall. 'The oldest trees,' observes Burckhardt, 'are distinguished by having the foliage and small branches at the top only, and by four, five, and even seven trunks springing from one base. The branches and foliage of the others were lower, but I saw none whose leaves touched the ground like those in these gardens.'

[Dr Richardson says, 'they are tall, large, and beautiful, the most picturesque productions of the vegetable world that we have seen. There are in this clump two generations of trees; the oldest are large and massy, rearing their heads to an enormous height, and spreading their branches afar. We measured one of them, which we afterwards saw was not the largest of the clump, and found it thirty-two feet in circumference. Seven of these trees have a particularly ancient appearance; the rest are young, but equally tall, though, for want of space, their branches are not so spreading. The old cedars are not found in any other part of Lebanon.'—'The celebrated cedar-grove of Lebanon,' says Dr Robinson, 'is at least two days journey off Beirout, near the northern and perhaps highest summit of the mountain, six or eight hours north of Jebel Sannin. It has been often and sufficiently described by travellers for the last three centuries; but they all differ as to the number of the oldest trees, inasmuch, as in counting, some have included more and some less of the younger ones. At present the number of trees appears to be on the increase, and amounts in all to several hundreds. This grove was long held to be the *only remnant* of the ancient cedars of Lebanon. But Seetzen, in 1805, discovered two other groves of greater extent; and the American missionaries, in travelling through the mountains, have also found many cedars in other parts. I add also the valuable testimony of

Professor Ehrenberg to the same fact. This distinguished naturalist spent a considerable time in Lebanon, and informs me that he found the cedar growing abundantly in those parts of the mountain lying north of the road between Balbec and Tripoli. The trees are of all sizes, old and young; but none so ancient and venerable as those usually visited.']

This statement sheds a clear and steady light on those passages of Scripture which refer to Lebanon; and enable us to reconcile with ease several apparent contradictions. So famous was this stupendous mountain in the days of Moses, that to be permitted to see it, was the object of his earnest desires and repeated prayers; and as the strongest expression of his admiration, he connects it in his addresses to the throne of his God, with Zion the future seat of the divine glory. 'I pray thee, let me go over and see the good land that is beyond Jordan; that goodly mountain and Lebanon.'

The storms and tempests which, gathering on the highest peak of Lebanon, burst on the plains and valleys below, are often very severe. When De la Vallè was travelling in the neighbourhood of that mountain, in the end of April, a wind blew from its summit so vehement and cold, with so great a profusion of snow, that though he and his company 'were in a manner buried in their quilted coverlets, yet it was sensibly felt, and proved very disagreeable.* It is not therefore without reason that Lebanon, or the white mountain, as the term signifies, is the name by which that lofty chain is distinguished; and that the sacred writers so frequently refer to the snow and the gelid waters of Lebanon.† They sometimes allude to it

* Travels, pp. 121, 122.

† There is no difficulty in accounting for the name Lebanon, signifying in Hebrew the 'White Mountain.' The whole mass of the mountain consists of whitish limestone; or at least, the rocky surface, as it reflects the light, exhibits every where a whitish aspect. —*Robinson's Bib. Resear.* vol. iii. p. 440.—*Editor.*

as a wild and desolate region ; and certainly no part of the earth is more dreary and barren than the Sannin, the region of perpetual snow. On that naked summit, the seat of storm and tempest, where the principles of vegetation are extinguished, the art and industry of man can make no impression ; nothing but the creating power of God himself can produce a favourable alteration. Thus, predicting a wonderful change, such as results from the signal manifestations of the divine favour to individuals or the church, the prophet demands, ‘Is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field?’* The contrast in this promise, between the naked, snowy, and tempestuous summits of Lebanon, and a field beautified and enriched with the fairest and most useful productions of nature, expresses with great force the difference which the smiles of Heaven produce in the most wretched and hopeless circumstances of an individual or a nation.

Lebanon was justly considered as a very strong barrier to the land of Promise ; and opposing an almost insurmountable obstacle to the movements of cavalry and chariots of war. When Sennacherib, therefore, in the arrogance of his heart, and the pride of his strength, wished to express the ease with which he had subdued the greatest difficulties, and how vain was the resistance of Hezekiah and his people, he says, ‘By the multitude of my chariots am I come up to the height of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon ; and I will cut down the tall cedars thereof, and the choice fir-trees thereof ; and I will enter into the height of his border, and the forest of his Carmel.’† What others accomplish on foot, with much labour and the greatest difficulty, by a winding path cut into steps, which no beast of burden, except the cautious and sure-footed mule, can tread, that haughty monarch vaunted he

* Isaiah xxix. 17.

† Isaiah xxxvii. 24.

could perform with horses and a multitude of chariots. Surrounded by crouching slaves, and accustomed to see every obstacle vanish before him, he vainly supposed he could gratify the most inordinate desire ; and what the world accounted physical impossibilities, must yield to his power.

The lofty summits of Lebanon were the chosen haunts of various beasts of prey ; the prints of whose feet, Maundrell and his party observed in the snow.* But they are not confined to these situations : a recent traveller continued descending several hours, through varied scenery, presenting at every turn some new feature, distinguished either by its picturesque beauty or awful sublimity. On arriving at one of the lower swells, which form the base of the mountain, he and his party broke rather abruptly into a deep and thick forest. As they traversed the bocage, the howlings of wild animals was distinctly heard from the recesses.† To these savage tenants of the desert, the prophet Habakkuk seems to allude in that prediction :—‘ For the violence of Lebanon shall cover thee, and the spoil of beasts which made them afraid, because of men’s blood, and for the violence of the land.’‡ The violence of Lebanon is a beautiful and energetic expression, denoting the ferocious animals that roam on its mountains, and lodge in its thickets ; and that, occasionally descending into the plain in quest of prey, ravage the fold or seize upon the unwary villager. To such dangers Solomon expressly refers, in the animated invitation which, in the name of the Redeemer, he addresses to the church :—‘ Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, with me from Lebanon ; look from the top of Amana, from the top of Shenar and Hermon, from the lion’s dens, and from the mountains of the leopards.’§ With these fierce and ravenous animals, the

* Travels, p. 140.

† Letters from Palestine, p. 118.

‡ Habakkuk li. 17.

§ Song iv. 8. [The author of the Itinerary believes a part of this

prophet Jeremiah joins the wolves of the evening, and sends them to lay waste the habitations of his guilty and unrepenting nation :—‘ Wherefore a lion out of the forest shall slay them, and a wolf of the evenings shall spoil them ; a leopard shall watch over their cities : every one that goeth out thence shall be torn in pieces ; because their transgressions are many, and their backslidings are increased.’* Near the base of the mountains, the traveller is entertained with a more pleasing sight than the lion slumbering in his den, or the print of his feet in the snow ; he sees the hart or the deer shooting from the steep, to quench his thirst in the stream.† It was when David wandered near the foot of Lebanon, driven by his unnatural son Absalom from Zion and the fountain of Israel, the scenes of divine manifestation, that he marked the rapid course of these animals to the rivulets which descended from the sides of the mountains. He saw the hart panting for the water-brooks, and the sight reminded him of his former enjoyments, while the circumstances of the creature bore a striking analogy to his own situation and feelings at the time. The passage in which, prompted by the casual incident, he poured out the ardent longings of his soul for the water of life, is wonderfully beautiful and tender :—‘ As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so pants my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, the living God : when shall I come and appear before God?’‡

Though the upper regions of Lebanon are unfit for the habitation of man, they still contribute to his advantage. From their accumulated snows descend a thousand streams of pure and wholesome water, to irrigate the fields below, to clothe them with verdure, and enrich them with the choicest products. The fountains and the streams of Lebanon furnish, accordingly, a

range, two leagues to the right of Schirrey, a Maronite village, to be ‘ the mountain of leopards ’ mentioned by Solomon.]—*Editor*.

* Jer. v. 6.

† Maundrell’s Travels, p. 141.

‡ Psalm lxxiii. 1.

number of pleasing figures to the inspired writers. The church is described in the Song of Solomon, as 'a fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon.'* And the prophet, in reproving the folly and perverseness of his people, demands :—' Will a man leave the snow of Lebanon which cometh from the rock of the field? or, shall the cold flowing waters that come from another place be forsaken?'† No man, in the sober exercise of reason, would leave the pure and refreshing streams which descend from the sides of that stupendous mountain, for the miry puddle or the insipid waters of the cistern; yet, with still greater absurdity than such conduct betrays, had the chosen people of God forsaken the worship of his name, for the degrading and unprofitable service of idols.

The approach to Lebanon is adorned with olive plantations, vineyards, and luxuriant fields; and its lower regions, besides the olive and the vine, are beautified with the myrtle, the styrax, and other odoriferous shrubs; and the perfume which exhales from these plants is increased by the fragrance of the cedars which crown its summits, or garnish its declivities. The great rupture which runs a long way up into the mountain, and is on both sides exceedingly steep and high, is clothed from the top to the bottom with fragrant evergreens, and every where refreshed with streams, descending from the rocks in beautiful cascades; the work of divine wisdom and goodness. These cool and limpid streams, uniting at the bottom, form a large and rapid torrent, whose agreeable mur-

* Song iv. 15. [The road beyond the Maronite village of Schirrey, sometimes presents a series of naturally formed stairs, which geologists call 'traps.' The descent continues, without interruption, for three hours; at the end of which a wide and rapid stream flows towards Tripoli, through a ravine, the sides of which are overspread with vineyards, or gardens of mulberries, apricots, and pomegranates. This is supposed to be the fountain of gardens and streams from Lebanon.—*Vere Monro*, vol. ii. p. 108.]—*Editor*.

† Jeremiah xviii. 14.

mur is heard over all the place, and adds greatly to the pleasure of that romantic scene.* The fragrant odours wafted from the aromatic plants of this noble mountain, have not been overlooked by the sacred writers. The eulogium which Christ pronounces on the graces of the church contains the following direct reference:—‘The smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon;’ and the prophet Hosea, in his glowing description of the future prosperity of Israel, converts the assertion of Solomon into a promise:—‘His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon.’†

The richness and flavour of the wines produced in its vineyards, have been celebrated by travellers in all ages. Rauwolf declares, that the wine which he drank at Canobin, a Greek monastery on mount Libanus, far surpassed any he had ever tasted. His testimony is corroborated by Le Bruin, who pronounces the wines of Canobin better and more delicate than are to be found any where else in the world.‡ They are red, of a beautiful colour, and so oily, that they adhere to the glass; these are so excellent, that our traveller thought he never tasted any kind of drink more delicious. The wines produced on other parts of the mountain, although in much greater abundance, are not nearly so good. To the delicious wines of Canobin the prophet Hosea certainly refers in this promise:—‘They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon.’§

De la Roque, who also visited Canobin, entirely agrees with these travellers in their account of the superior quality of its wines; and expresses his full

* Maundrell's Journey, pp. 118, 142, 143.

† Song iv. 11; Hosea xiv. 6.

‡ Ray's Coll. of Travels, p. 205-207; Le Bruin, vol. ii. ch. 57.

§ Hosea xiv. 7.

conviction, that the reputation of the wines of Lebanon mentioned by the prophet, is well founded.* Volney asserts indeed, that he found the wines of Lebanon of a very inferior quality; this may be true, and yet the testimony of these respectable travellers perfectly correct. He might not be presented with the most exquisite wine of Canobin, which has deservedly obtained so high a character; or the vintage of that year might be inferior. But whatever might be the reason, no doubt can be entertained concerning the accuracy of other equally credible witnesses, who, from their own experience, and with one voice, attest the unrivalled excellence of the wine of Lebanon. These travellers admit, that the neighbourhood of Canobin produces wines of inferior quality; but, when the wine of Lebanon is mentioned by way of eminence, the best is undoubtedly meant.†

In striking allusion to these productions, it is promised:—‘His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell (or his memorial) as the original term signifies, as Lebanon.’ His branches shall spread like the mighty arms of the cedar, every one of which is equal in size to a tree; his beauty shall be as the olive tree, which is generally admitted to be one of the most beautiful productions of nature; and his smell, his very memorial, shall be as the wine of Lebanon, which delights the taste, and the very recollection of which excites the commendation of those that have drunk it, long after the banquet is over. The meaning of these glowing figures undoubtedly is, that the righteous man shall prosper by the distinguishing favour of Heaven; shall become excellent, and useful, and highly respected while he lives; and after his death, his memory shall be blessed,

* *Voy. de Syrie et du Mont Liban.* tom. i. pp. 54, 55.

† The wine of Lebanon is strong, red, rich, of a fine scent and flavour, resembling the wines of Vesuvius more than those of any other European vineyard that I am acquainted with.—*Vere Monro*, vol. ii. p. 107.—*Editor*.

and embalmed in the affectionate recollection of the church, for the benefit of many who had not the opportunity of profiting by his example.

The fragrant odour of the wines produced in the vineyards of Lebanon, seems chiefly to have attracted the notice of our translators. This quality is either factitious or natural. The orientals, not satisfied with the fragrance emitted by the essential oil of the grape, frequently put spices into their wines to increase their flavour. To this practice Solomon alludes in these words:—‘ I would cause thee to drink of spiced wine of the juice of my pomegranate.’* But Savary, in his *Letters on Greece*, affirms, that various kinds of naturally perfumed wines are produced in Crete and some of the neighbouring islands:† and the wine of Lebanon, to which the sacred writer alludes, was probably of the same species.

The cedar of Lebanon has, in all ages, been reckoned an object of unrivalled grandeur and beauty in the vegetable kingdom. It is accordingly one of the natural images which frequently occur in the poetical style of the Hebrew prophets; and is appropriated, to denote kings, princes, and potentates of the highest rank. Thus, the prophet Isaiah, whose writings abound with metaphors and allegories of this kind, in denouncing the judgments of God upon the proud and arrogant, declares, that ‘ the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon all the cedars of Lebanon that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan.’‡ The king of Israel used the same figure in his reply to the challenge of the king of Judah:—‘ The thistle that was in Lebanon, sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon, saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife: and there passed

* Song viii. 2.

† Pp. 104, and 229, 293, note; see also Diodorus Sicul. 157, a. ed. Amsteladami, Wesselin. Xenophon says he was treated with naturally fragrant wines in the vineyards of Armenia.—*Anab.* lib. i. cap. 4, sec. 9.

‡ Isaiah ii. 13.

by a wild beast that was in Lebanon, and trode down the thistle.* The spiritual prosperity of the righteous man is compared by the Psalmist to the same noble plant:—‘The righteous shall flourish as the palm tree; he shall grow as the cedar in Lebanon.’† Whatever is majestic and comely in the human countenance, whatever commands the reverence, and excites the love of the beholder—Lebanon and its towering cedars are employed by the sacred writers to express. In the commendation of the church, the countenance of her Lord is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars: while in the eulogium which he pronounces on his beloved, one feature of her countenance is compared to the highest peak of that mountain, to the Sannin, which rises with majestic grandeur above the tallest cedars that adorn its summits:—‘Thy nose is as the tower of Lebanon, which looketh toward Damascus.’‡ Calmet imagines with no small degree of probability, that the sacred writer alludes to an elegant tower of white marble, which in his days crowned the summit of a lofty precipice, at the foot of which the river Barrady foams, about the distance of two miles from Damascus. When Maundrell visited the place he found a small structure like a sheick’s sepulchre, erected on the highest point of the precipice, where it had probably stood. From this elevated station, which forms a part of Lebanon, the traveller enjoyed the most perfect view of the city. So charming was the landscape, so rich and diversified the scenery, that he confessedly found it no easy matter to tear himself away from the paradise of delights which bloomed at his feet. Nor was a very late traveller less delighted with the enchanting prospect.§

To break the cedars, and shake the enormous mass on which they grow, are the figures that David selects, to express the awful majesty and infinite power of

* 2 Kings xiv. 9.

† Song vii. 4.

‡ Psalm xcii. 12.

§ Richardson’s Travels, vol. ii. p. 512.

Jehovah :—‘ The voice of the Lord is powerful ; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty. The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars : yea, the Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon. He makes them also to skip like a calf : Lebanon and Sirion like a young unicorn.’* This description of the divine majesty and power, possesses a character of awful sublimity, which is almost unequalled, even in the page of inspiration. Jehovah has only to speak, and the cedar which braves the fierce winds of heaven is broken, even the cedar of Lebanon, every arm of which rivals the size of a tree ; he has only to speak, and the enormous mass of matter on which it grows, shakes to its foundation, till extensive, and lofty, and ponderous as it is, it leaps like the young of the herd in their joyous frolics, and skips like the young unicorn, the swiftest of the four-footed race.†

The stupendous size, the extensive range, and great elevation of Libanus ; its towering summits capped with perpetual snow, or crowned with fragrant cedars ; its olive plantations ; its vineyards producing the most delicious wines ; its clear fountains and cold-flowing brooks ; its fertile vales and odoriferous shrubberies,—combine to form, in Scripture language, ‘ the glory of Lebanon.’ But that glory, liable to change, has, by the unanimous consent of modern travellers, suffered a sensible decline. The extensive forests of cedar, which adorned and perfumed the summits and declivities of those mountains, have almost disappeared. Only a small number of these ‘ trees of God, planted by his almighty hand,’ which, according to the usual import

* Psalm **xxix.** 4-6. [This Psalm is supposed to have been written on the occasion of a tremendous thunder storm which broke the three years drought.]—*Editor.*

† A more sublime spectacle can scarcely be conceived than the image employed in the above passage by the Psalmist,—the thunder rolling among these enormous masses, and the lightning playing among the lofty cedars, withering their foliage, crashing the branches that had stood the storms of centuries, and with the utmost ease hurling the roots and trunks into the distant vale.—*Hardy’s Notices of the Holy Land.*—*Editor.*

of the phrase, signally displayed the divine power, wisdom, and goodness, now remain. Their countless number in the days of Solomon, and their prodigious bulk, must be recollected, in order to feel the force of that sublime declaration of the prophet :—‘ Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt-offering.’* Though the trembling sinner were to make choice of Lebanon for the altar ; were to cut down all its forests to form the pile ; though the fragrance of this fuel, with all its odoriferous gums, were the incense ; the wine of Lebanon pressed from all its vineyards, the libation ; and all its beasts, the propitiatory sacrifice ; all would prove insufficient to make atonement for the sins of men ; would be regarded as nothing in the eyes of the supreme Judge for the expiation of even one transgression. The just and holy law of God requires a nobler altar, a costlier sacrifice, and a sweeter perfume,—the obedience and death of a Divine Person to atone for our sins, and the incense of his continual intercession, to secure our acceptance with the Father of mercies, and admission into the mansions of eternal rest.

The conversion of the Gentile nations from the worship of idols and the bondage of corruption, to the service and enjoyment of the true God, is foretold in these beautiful and striking terms :—‘ The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them : and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing ; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon : they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.’† In the animated description which the same prophet gives of the prosperity to which the kingdom of Christ was destined to rise in the New Testament dispensation, the following allusion to the glory of Lebanon again occurs :—‘ And it shall come to pass in the last

* Isaiah xl. 16.

† Isaiah xxxv. 1, 2.

days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it.* By these words the prophet meant to inform his nation, what the event has fully verified, that the church of the Gentiles was to be of great extent, like the range of Lebanon, intersecting the country in various directions; was to be firmly established in the earth, like a fortress built upon the summits of a steep and lofty mountain; was to overcome all opposition, set at defiance the hostile movements of all her enemies, and regard with indifference or contempt, the envious exertions of every competitor, for 'she shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto her.' The rapid growth of the New Testament church, her great extent, and the countless number of her converts, are finely described in the figurative language of the Psalmist:—'There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon, and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.†

The forests of the East, always near the point of ignition, under the intense beams of a vertical sun, from the carelessness or malice of those who take shelter in their recesses, are frequently set on fire; and the devouring element sometimes continues its ravages, till extensive plantations are consumed. To such a terrible conflagration, the prophet justly compares the destructive operations of the Roman armies under the command of Vespasian and Titus, against the nation of the Jews, when the nobles and rulers were slaughtered, the city and temple reduced to ashes, the people either put to the sword or sold into slavery, and the whole country laid waste:—'Open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour thy cedars. Howl, fir-tree, for the cedar is fallen; because the mighty is

* Isaiah ii. 2.

† Psalm lxxii. 16.

spoiled: howl, O ye oaks of Bashan; for the forest of the vintage is come down.’*

Le Bruin concludes his description of Lebanon with an account of the cedar apples, or the fruit which these celebrated trees produce.† He cut one of them in two, and found that the smell within exactly resembled turpentine. They exuded a juice from small oval grains with which a great many small cavities are filled, which also resembles turpentine, both in smell and in clamminess. These cedar apples must be classed with the scented fruits of the oriental regions; and have perhaps contributed greatly to the fragrance for which the sacred writers so frequently celebrate the mountains of Lebanon.

[The long and elevated range of Antilebanon separates, nearly opposite Damascus, into two branches, the easternmost of which is the proper continuation of that mountainous ridge. The majestic hill in which it terminates,—which almost perpetually has its summit crowned with snow, the deep ravines on its sides filled with ice like glaciers, and is estimated at about ten thousand feet above the level of the Mediterranean],—is in Scripture distinguished by the name of Hermon;‡ and is by consequence mentioned as the northern boundary of the country beyond Jordan, and more particularly of the kingdom of Og, or of the half tribe of Manasseh on the east of that river.§ It is known in the sacred volume by different names, the Sidonians called it Sirion, and the Amorites Shenir. The Jewish lawgiver, in the book of Deuteronomy, gives it the name of Sion (as it is spelt in the Hebrew text.) ‘And they possessed his land, and the land of Og king of Bashan: . . . from Aroer, which is by the bank of the river Arnon, even unto mount Sion, which is Hermon.’|| This mount Sion must not be confounded

* Zechariah xi. 1, 2.

† Le Bruin, tom. ii. chap. 57.

‡ Now Jebel-esh Sheikh.—*Editor*.

§ Deuteronomy iii. 8, 9.

|| Deuteronomy iv. 47, 48.

with the famous mountain of Jerusalem, which lay in a different part of the country, and was celebrated for a very different reason. In the book of Joshua, it is called Seir, which is only another way of reading Shenir. Halak is mentioned in the same verse, and seems to be a contiguous mountain in the great range of Lebanon, remarkable, as the name signifies, for its smoothness.* Again, this mount Hermon is thought, not without probability, to be the same with mount Hor, mentioned by Moses in his description of the promised land:—‘And this shall be your north border; from the great sea, ye shall point out for you mount Hor; from mount Hor ye shall point out your border unto the entrance of Hamath.’† But Joshua, speaking of the lands which remained to be possessed, among other parts, mentions ‘all Lebanon, toward the sun rising, from Baalgad (a valley), under mount Hermon, unto the entering into Hamath.’‡ By comparing these two passages, it seems extremely probable, that mount Hor is the same with mount Hermon. Both of them are placed in the same northern angle of the promised land, and bear the same relative situation to Hamath; and by consequence, the same mountain is intended under two different names.

But, besides this mount Hermon in the northern border of the country beyond Jordan, we read of another mountain of the same name, lying within the land of Canaan, on the west of the river Jordan, not far from mount Tabor. To this mountain, the holy Psalmist is thought to refer in these words:—‘The north and the south, thou hast created them: Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name;’§ and in the following passage:—‘As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descends upon the mountains of Sion.’||

Maundrell, in his journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem,

* Joshua xi. 17.

† Joshua xiii. 5.

‡ Psalm cxxxiii. 3.

† Numbers xxxiv. 7, 8.

§ Psalm lxxxix. 12.

had a full view of Tabor and Hermon, at about six or seven hours distance to the eastward, and learnt from experience, what the Psalmist means by the dew of Hermon,—the tents of the whole party being as wet with it as if it had rained all night.*

[These two passages in the Psalms have occasioned no small difficulty to commentators. From the circumstance of Tabor and Hermon being associated together in the same description, it has been supposed that the hills must have been adjacent; and as the site of Tabor is indisputably near the eastern extremity of the great plain of Esdraelon, the name of Hermon has been given to a high ridge, Ed Dûhy, on the north of the same extensive valley, and that of 'Little' Hermon, in contradistinction to the majestic Jebel-esh-Sheikh, in Lebanon. At what time this designation was first introduced, cannot be ascertained, although it seems to have been in common use in the time of Jerome. But that this was not the Hermon of the Bible, is evident from the hint conveyed in the words of the Psalmist as to its geographical situation. According to the usual style of Hebrew poetry, which makes the latter distich of a verse frequently nothing more than an echo, in different words, of the sense of the preceding, the inspired bard, who in verse twelfth had burst into the exclamation, 'The north and south, thou hast created them,' continues in the next clause the same sentiment figuratively, by specifying Tabor and Hermon as the two most prominent points in these opposite quarters of the favoured land of his nativity. In this view, the language is most expressive and full of energy. If we suppose Little Hermon, which is in close contiguity to Tabor, to be the hill that is meant, it is obvious that the beauty and grandeur of the idea is entirely lost. But if we consider the true idea of the passage to be an expression of admiring gratitude for the rich fertilizing influences which the bountiful God of Israel had imparted

* Maundrell's Journey, p. 57.

to that land, what could more graphically convey such a sentiment than the selection of two mountains, so opposite in their localities, as well as in the character of the regions in which they stand, and both equally flourishing under the refreshing dews of heaven. 'Thou hast made the north and the south; and whatever be the region, the traces of thy power may be seen, the kind arrangements of thy providence may be felt. Southern Tabor, surrounded with fertile plains, its sides adorned with trees and shrubs, all green and flowery to its summit, and northern Hermon, rearing its snow-capt head in gloomy majesty amidst the solitude of Lebanon, shall both rejoice in thy name.'

[The other passage, Psalm cxxxiii. 3, is involved in still greater obscurity. The literal rendering of the original is, 'as the dew of Hermon that descended on the mountains of Zion.' But our translators, apparently unable to conceive how the dew of Hermon, in the north of Palestine, should be said to descend on the mountains of Zion, which were far south at Jerusalem, have endeavoured to obviate the difficulty by introducing a supplement; as the dew of Hermon, *and as the dew* that descended on the mountains of Zion. According to which rendering the meaning of the Psalmist will be, that the refreshing dews which the Lord gave to the Holy Land were so copious, and at the same time so extensively diffused, that not a spot was neglected, or left without its necessary proportion. The north and south equally shared in the genial influences of heaven. But the distinguished manner in which Hermon is mentioned, obviously in preference to the favoured hill of Zion, precludes the adoption of this view. Houbigant suggests a mode of removing the difficulty by reading Sion instead of Zion, which he supposes to have crept in through the carelessness of a translator. But this is a liberty with the text of Scripture, which a strong necessity alone can justify. Re-land, while he frankly acknowledges the great diffi-

culty of the passage, inclines strongly to the opinion, that Hermon, in the vicinity of Tabor, is the mountain referred to, and that Zion denotes some of the little hills that lay around. A writer in the *Christian Magazine* has thrown out an ingenious conjecture, that the name Zion, instead of being understood as a proper name, denoting the holy hill of God, or any other hill, should be taken adjectively, according to its original meaning, as signifying *dry*, or *arid*, standing in need of moisture. Unity 'is as the dew of Hermon;' the copious dew 'that descends on the dry or parched mountains, refreshing, enriching, and fertilizing them.'* But perhaps the most natural and obvious solution of the difficulty is to understand Zion, the metropolis, to be used as the representative of the mountains of Palestine. 'A good reason,' says the writer alluded to, 'for specifying Zion, and taking the designation of the mountains from it, might in this case be assigned. Not only did God's respect to the worship performed in Zion secure the blessing from which the figure is borrowed, but, according to the scope of the Psalms, Zion was the centre of unity to the tribes, and the scene of their sacred communion. Thither they all went up to testify their fellowship in the Lord; and probably the Psalm might be originally intended to celebrate the beautiful spectacle in the seasons of holy convocation, with the various advantages of that unity which was thus cherished among them. A different interpretation must be given to the last sentence in the Psalm, according as the one or other of these views is adopted. If the former, then the words, "for their God commandeth the blessing, even life everlasting," must be understood in a general way of the scene where unity prevails, "as dews, like those of Hermon, refresh and fertilize the dry and parched mountains, so unity is truly and extensively beneficial: it is so through the countenance and approbation of heaven,

* *Christian Magazine*, September 1809.

for there, in that happy scene where it prevails, God commandeth the blessing." If, again, the latter view be preferred, the words must be directly understood of Zion, the holy city, or beloved, of the living God. "There he commandeth his blessing, life everlasting."']*

Another branch of Lebanon, which extended for a considerable way along the eastern coast of the country beyond Jordan, is mount Gilead, a mountainous range, extending from Hermon on the north, almost to the country of Moab on the south. According to Burckhardt, however, that part of this hilly tract, properly termed Gilead, is a small mountain ridge, now called Djelaad, about six or seven miles south of the Jabbok, and eight miles in length, where Laban overtook Jacob in his return to his father's house; and being warned of God in a dream, not to injure the patriarch, made a covenant with him, and in witness of the solemn transaction, the two made a heap of stones, and entertained their followers upon it, in token of sincere and lasting friendship. From this incident, the place was called Galeed, the heap, or, as the name properly signifies, the round heap, or circle of witnesses, and Mizpah, a beacon or watch-tower; for said Laban to his son-in-law:—"The Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another, if thou shalt afflict my daughters, or if thou shalt take other wives beside my daughters, no man is with us; see, God is witness betwixt me and thee."† That this was done in a mountain, we are expressly told; and from the name given to the heap of stones constructed on that occasion, the whole mount, together with the circumjacent country, received in succeeding times, the name of Gilead. It lies on the east of the sea of Galilee, forming part of the ridge of moun-

* Psalm cxxxiii. 3. [The following reading suggested by Dr Boothroyd, gives a simple and natural meaning to the passage:—

'It is like the dew *which descends* on Hermon,
Or which descends on the mountains of Zion.']—*Editor*.

† Genesis xxxi. 49, 50,

G.

tains which run from mount Lebanon towards the south on the east of Canaan, and included the mountainous region, called in the New Testament, Trachonitis.

From the other name given to the heap of stones cast up between Laban and Jacob, the city or town of Mizpah, built in future times near the scene of their confederation, probably derived its name. Hence we find it among the cities pertaining to the half tribe of Manasseh, which settled in that region; and in the days of the Judges, it was chosen by Jephtha as the place of his residence, and the seat of his government, after the defeat of the Ammonites.

Before the reduction of the country beyond Jordan, Gilead seems to have formed a part of the kingdom over which Og swayed the sceptre. 'I gave,' said Moses, 'unto the half tribe of Manasseh, all the region of Argob, with all Bashan. . . . Jair the son of Manasseh took all the country of Argob . . . and I gave Gilead unto Machir.'*

[Gilead was distinguished for its extensive and flourishing plantations, which produced a valuable gum known by way of eminence as the balm of Gilead,† which was held in so great estimation all over the East that it formed an article of general commerce, and like the spices of India in the same age, was considered a present worthy of being made even to princes. It was, however, its uncommon fertility in ancient times, and the great value of its produce, that caused this district to be so frequently invaded.‡ Although Gilead has long ceased to produce these balsamic trees, it is still remarkable as one of the most fertile districts of Palestine. 'The beauty of this country,' says Mr Buckingham, 'so surprised us, that we often asked each other, what were our sensations? The landscape alone, which varied at every turn, and gave us new beauties from

* Deuteronomy iii. 13-15.

† Genesis xxxvii. 25; Jeremiah viii. 22; xlv. 11.

‡ Judges xi.; 1 Samuel xi. 1; Amos i. 3, 13.

every point of view, was of itself worth an excursion to the eastward of Jordan ; and the park-like scenes that sometimes softened the romantic character of the whole, reminded us of similar spots in less neglected lands.']

But besides this mount Gilead beyond Jordan, we read of another mountain of that name on the west side of the river, in the lot of the children of Joseph, where Gideon assembled the forces with which he defeated the Midianites. As that renowned captain seems to have pitched his camp on the west side of the river Jordan, a difficulty has been started concerning the mountain on which he assembled his troops, which has greatly perplexed commentators and other writers. Gilead, according to some of these writers, must be understood here as denoting the tribe of Manasseh in general, and, by consequence, applicable to both the half tribes, as well that on the west as that on the east side of the river. In this view, mount Gilead here denotes no more than the *mount lying in Manasseh* ; and so may be understood of Gilboa, near to which Gideon was encamped. Dr Wells, who quotes this opinion, is disposed to admit a corruption in the text, from the mistake of some transcriber, who wrote Gilead instead of Gilboa. This mode of removing the difficulty has the advantage of being both easy and quite in the fashion ; but, as the necessary effect of it is to make the sacred Scriptures speak any language, and deliver any doctrine the critic pleases, it ought never to be adopted except in cases of extreme necessity. It is certainly of considerable weight, that the present reading is followed by all the old versions ; and there is nothing unreasonable in supposing, that two mountains in different parts of the country, might, for reasons that can no longer be discovered, be distinguished by the same name. Dr Wells himself admits, that Brocard the monk, in the description of the Holy Land mentions a mount Gilead situated towards Jezreel, and conse-

quently towards the mountains of Gilboa; which is quite consistent with the history of Gideon.*

Gilboa was, according to Jerome and Eusebius, a ridge of mountains, six miles distant from Scythopolis, or Bethshan; among which stood a town of the same name. These mountains were remarkable for the death of Saul and Jonathan, and the total defeat of their forces in a general battle with the Philistines; an event which the holy Psalmist laments in the most tender elegiac strains:—‘The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places; how are the mighty fallen! Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain upon you, nor fields of offerings: for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul as though he had not been anointed with oil.’†

The only remarkable mountain on the western border of Canaan, is Carmel, which lies on the sea coast, at the south end of the tribe of Asher, and is frequently mentioned in the sacred writings. [It is properly a ridge of mountains, or of high table-land, running for six or eight miles south and north, although the name is generally given only to a single limestone peak, which rises in the shape of a flattened cone 2000 feet, and is the promontory which forms the bay of Acre. It extends far out into the sea, and dips its feet in the waters. The highest part of the ridge is toward the south. According to Schubert the highest point is about 1200 feet above the level of the sea.‡ Towards the south-east Carmel is connected with the mountains of Samaria by the broad range of low wooded hills, separating the great plain of the more southern coast from that of Esdraelon.] On this mountain which is very rocky, and about two thousand feet in height, the prophet Elijah fixed his residence: and the monks of the Greek church, who have a convent upon it, show the inquisitive stranger the grotto neatly cut out

* Wells' Historical Geography, vol. i. p. 346.

† 2 Samuel i. 19, 21.

‡ Buckingham estimates it at 1500.

in the solid rock, where, at a distance from the tumult of the world, the venerable seer reposed. At the distance of a league are two fountains, which they pretend the prophet by his miraculous powers made to spring out of the earth ; and lower down, towards the foot of the mountain, is the cave where he instructed the people. It is an excavation in the rock, cut very smooth both above and below, of about twenty paces in length, fifteen in breadth, and very high ; and Thevenot, who paid a visit to mount Carmel, pronounces it one of the finest grottos that can be seen.* The beautiful shape and towering height of Carmel, furnish Solomon with a striking simile expressive of the loveliness and majesty of the church in the eyes of her redeemer ; ‘ Thine head upon thee is like Carmel ; and the hair of thine head like purple ; the King is held in the galleries.’† The mountain itself is nothing but rock. The monks, however, have with great labour covered some parts of it with soil, on which they cultivate flowers and fruits of various kinds ; but the fields around have been celebrated in all ages for the extent

* Travels, part i. p. 299. [The retreat is worthy to be a prophet's refuge. Its solitude is deep ; each aspect of nature around is wild and lone, and at times beautiful ; beneath is the sea. The entrance is partly screened by fig-trees and vines ; within is a lofty excavation of beautiful proportions, at least fifty feet long, with a recess on one side. The memory of the prophet is equally venerated by Christians and Turks. The latter visit this cave, which is entered by a massive gate, in great numbers, and appear to be much edified by the sight, for they preserve a deep seriousness of demeanour. As I stood at the farthest extremity, the light glancing through the half-closed gate, the contrasted features of the dervish keeper, of the catholic monks, and their European guests, the picturesque Arabs and Armenians, formed a strange sight ; all were gathered with reverence on the spot sacred to the recollection of Elijah. From its portal we saw, at the foot of the promontory, the narrow path which Paul must have traversed in his journey from Ptolemais to Cesarea. This is not the only spot, however, on Carmel, connected with the prophet. At some distance inland on the banks of the Kishon, which flows at the northern foot of the mountain, the spot where the guilty priests of Baal were destroyed is pointed out.]—*Corne's Views in Syria.—Editor.*

† Song vii. 5.

of their pastures, and the richness of their verdure. So great was the fertility of this region, that in the language of the sacred writers, the name Carmel is often equivalent to a fruitful field. This was undoubtedly the reason that the covetous and churlish Nabal chose it for the range of his numerous flocks and herds.*

Carmel was one of the barriers of the promised land, which Sennacherib boasted he would scale with the multitude of his horses and his chariots :—‘ I will enter into the lodgings of his borders, and into the forest of his Carmel.’† Ungrateful as the soil of this mountain is, the wild vines and olive trees that are still found among the brambles which encumber its declivities, prove that the hand of industry has not laboured among the rocks of Carmel in vain. So well adapted were the sides of this mountain to the cultivation of the vine, that the kings of Judah covered every improveable spot with vineyards and plantations of olives. Its deep and entangled forests, its savage rocks and lofty summit, have been in all ages the favourite retreat of the guilty or the oppressed. The fastnesses of this rugged mountain are so difficult of access, that the prophet Amos classes them with the deeps of hell, the height of heaven, and the bottom of the sea :—‘ Though they dig into hell (or the dark and silent chambers of the grave), thence shall mine hand take them ; though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down ; and though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out thence ; and though they be hid from my sight in the bottom of the sea, thence will I command the serpent, and he shall bite them.’‡ The church, in her most afflicted state, is compared to a fugitive lurking in the deep recesses of this mountain :—‘ Feed thy people with thy rod, the flock of thine heritage which dwell solitarily in the wood in the midst of Carmel.’§ Lebanon raises to heaven a

* 1 Samuel xxv. 2.

† Amos ix. 2, 3.

‡ 2 Kings xix. 23.

§ Micah vii. 14.

summit of naked and barren rocks, covered for the greater part of the year with snow; but the top of Carmel, how naked and sterile soever its present condition, seems, in the days of Amos, to have been clothed with verdure which seldom was known to fade:—‘And he said, the Lord will roar from Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem, and the habitation of the shepherds shall mourn, and the top of Carmel shall wither.’* These are the excellencies answering to the ‘glory of Lebanon,’ for which this mountain was so greatly renowned. Even the lofty genius of Isaiah, stimulated and guided by the spirit of inspiration, could not find a more appropriate figure to express the flourishing state of the Redeemer’s kingdom, than the excellency of Carmel and Sharon.†

[Tabor, called by the Arabs Jebel et Tour, situated in the middle of Galilee, and on the confines of the territory assigned as the inheritance of the tribe of Issachar,‡ is a lofty mountain of a conical form, which rises a mile in height, in the plain of Esdraelon, at two hours distance eastward from Nazareth.§ Along the whole way to the top there are a great many paths, which wind round the sloping sides of the mountain, and by which, notwithstanding they are thickly covered with small oaks, planted in beautiful clumps, (*Ilex. Egllops* and *Butm*) and a variety of odoriferous plants and flowers, the ascent is greatly facilitated, the more especially that steps are here and there cut

* Amos i. 2.

† Well’s Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 349. [Another Carmel in the tribe of Judah is mentioned Josh. xv. 55; 1 Sam. xxv. 2; 2 Sam. iii. 3.]—*Editor.*

‡ Joshua xix. 17-23.

§ Travellers, however, have given very different statements of its height. Dr Robertson estimates it at not more than 1000 feet above the plain; D’Arvieux makes it a full mile; Pococke two; Hasselquist three; Egmont and Heyman rather more. This discrepancy seems to have arisen from their having all ascended on horseback, and, consequently, taken a more circuitous route than they would have done had they been on foot.—*Editor.*

out in the rock. The soil is good, and the grass is luxuriant, all the way to the summit.] After a very laborious ascent of near an hour, Maundrell reached the highest part of the mountain; which has a plain area at the top, fertile and pleasant, of an oval figure, extending about one furlong in breadth, and two in length; [or three thousand paces in circumference, according to the more accurate measurement of D'Arvieux. To a person stationed at the foot, the mountain seems to terminate in a sharp point, but on reaching the summit one is astonished to find a flat spacious area, enclosed with noble wide spreading trees, on all sides except the south. Hence it has been compared to a cone with the point struck off. It is described as consisting wholly of limestone;* and from its height, as well as isolated situation, it is during the greater part of the summer season enveloped with thick clouds, which, however, gradually disperse as the day advances, while during night more copious dews fall on it than almost on any other part of the country.† The rock goat, the ounce, the fallow deer, wild boars, which Egmont and Heyman saw the Arabs hunting, and great quantities of red partridges (*Tetrao rubricollis*) are found on it. It was on the top of this mountain that Barak mustered his forces, and at the foot of it he fought and routed the forces of Jabin.‡ Afterwards a city was built on the summit, which, with the adjoining grounds, was assigned to the children of Merari.§] It was anciently surrounded with walls and trenches, and other fortifications, many remains of which are still to be seen.

[‘The top,’ says Pococke, ‘is encompassed with a wall which Josephus built in forty days. There was also a wall along the middle of it, which divided the south part, on which the city stood, from the north part, which is lower, and is called the meidan or place,

* Buckingham and Robinson.

† Judges iv. 6, 14.

‡ Psalm lxxxix. 12.

§ 1 Chron. vi. 77.

being probably used for exercises when there was a city here, which Josephus mentions by the name of Ataburion. Within the outer wall on the north side are several deep fosses, out of which it is probable the stones were dug to build the walls, and these fosses seem to have answered the end of cisterns, to preserve the rain water, and were also some defence to the city. There are likewise a great number of cisterns under ground for preserving the rain-water. To the south, where the ascent was most easy, there are fosses cut on the outside, to render the access to the walls more difficult. Some of the gates also of the city remain. Antiochus, king of Syria, took the fortress on the top of the hill. Vespasian also got possession of it, and after that Josephus fortified it with strong walls. The ruins, however, obviously belong to different ages.']

From the top of Tabor, the traveller enjoys an extensive and beautiful prospect, that fully compensates him for the labour of climbing the steep ascent. In Maundrell's opinion, 'it is impossible for the eyes of man to behold an higher gratification of this nature.' To the south, he discovered a series of valleys and mountains, which extends as far as Jerusalem; while to the east, the valley of Jordan and the lake of Tiberias, appeared to expand under his feet; beyond this, the eye loses itself towards the plains of the Hauran, and then turning to the north by the mountains of Hasbeya, reposes on the fertile plains of Galilee, without being able to reach the sea.* On the lofty summit of this beautiful mountain, by the constant and universal suffrage of antiquity, our Saviour was transfigured before his disciples: when the fashion of his countenance was altered, his face shone like the sun, and his raiment became white and glistering.†

[The traditionary remembrance of this glorious event

* Maundrell's Journey, pp. 112, 113; Volney's Trav. vol. ii. p. 143.

† Luke ix. 29.

was perpetuated in the fourth century by two monasteries which the empress Helena caused to be erected in honour respectively of Moses and Elias. The dilapidated remains of a very ancient church were seen in 1833 by Captain Fitzmaurice, who was informed that it stood on the very spot where the transfiguration took place. Mr Rae Wilson tells us, that the monks pointed out to him three grottos, which were excavated in the rock, in commemoration of the three tabernacles which Peter proposed to construct ; and Burekhardt assures us, that thousands of pilgrims repair to it to celebrate an anniversary instituted in honour of the remarkable transaction in the Saviour's life, the supposed occurrence of which on Tabor has given its chief importance and interest to this mountain. But it may, on very strong grounds, be questioned, whether the transfiguration occurred, or rather, it may with confidence be asserted, that it was not transacted, on Tabor. For this mountain, though several times alluded to in the Old Testament,* is not once mentioned in the New—an omission on the part of the evangelists altogether unaccountable, if this well known height had been selected as the scene of so glorious a display of the Saviour's majesty. But it could not have been selected for that object, as its summit being then occupied by a fortified town, the privacy essential to the promotion of the great ends of the transfiguration could not have been obtained ; and, besides, as our Lord immediately previous to that exhibition of his glory was at Cesarea Philippi, and, after it, passed through Galilee to Capernaum, it seems highly probable that the place where Moses and Elias appeared talking with him, was somewhere on the northern shore of the Lake of Tiberias, and in the neighbourhood of the first mentioned town, which contains a number of isolated little hills, well adapted for retirement. ' The conclusion,' says Maundrell, ' that Tabor was the mount of Transfiguration,

* Jeremiah xlv. 18 ; Hosea v. 1.

may possibly be true, but the argument used to prove it seems incompetent; because the term *apart*, most likely relates to the withdrawing and retirement of the persons spoken of, and not to the situation of the mountain.']

Among the pastoral districts of Canaan, the kingdom of Bashan holds a distinguished place; it is a rough mountainous tract, lying between the hills of Gilead on the east, the river Jordan on the west, Hermon on the north, and the brook Jabbok on the south. On account of the rugged nature of the surface, it was called by the Greeks, Trachonitis, or the rough mountainous country; * and the name Bashan was given to the district, from a lofty hill of that name which stood in the heart of it. It was a valuable possession, which, on the defeat of Og, fell into the hands of Moses, and was assigned by him as a portion of the half tribe of Manasseh.†

It furnishes the sacred writers with many beautiful allusions and apt illustrations. The holy Psalmist celebrates in the songs of Zion, with his inimitable energy, the elevation of its hills and mountains, and the strength and beauty of its oaks:—‘The hill of God is as the hill of Bashan, an high hill as the hill of Bashan.’‡ Thus, the inspired bard reckoned it the highest praise he could give to the mount, where he spread the tabernacle for the ark of Jehovah, that it resembled the hills of that country. In one particular, the hill of Zion far excelled them, clothed as they were with verdant pastures, and covered with flocks and herds; it was the *hill of God*, of which he had said, ‘this is my rest, here will I dwell, for I have desired it.’ So beautiful and stately were the oaks of Bashan, that the prophet Isaiah classes them with the cedars of Lebanon, to express by a striking metaphor, the great, the mighty, and the noble, who, by their pride and

* Wells' Historical Geography, vol. I. pp. 298, 301, 302.

† Numbers xxxii. 33.

‡ Psalm lxxviii. 15.

arrogance, had incurred the righteous displeasure of the Most High. To form a just idea of the force and delicacy of the picture, it is necessary to quote the passage. 'Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty. The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of man shall be bowed down; and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up, and he shall be brought low; and upon all the cedars of Lebanon that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan.*' 'These verses,' as Dr Lowth justly observes, 'afford us a striking example of that peculiar way of writing, which makes a principal characteristic of the parabolical or poetical style of the Hebrews, and in which their prophets deal so largely; namely, their manner of exhibiting things divine, spiritual, moral, and political, by a set of images taken from things natural, artificial, religious, historical, in the way of metaphor or allegory. Of these, nature furnishes much the largest and the most pleasant share; and all poetry has chiefly recourse to natural images, as the richest and most powerful source of illustration. But it may be observed of the Hebrew poetry in particular, that in the use of such images, and in the application of them in the way of illustration and ornament, it is more regular and constant, than any other poetry whatever; that it has for the most part a set appropriated in a manner to the explication of certain subjects. Thus, you will find in many other places besides this before us, that the cedars of Lebanon, and the oaks of Bashan, are used in the way of metaphor and allegory, for kings, princes, potentates of the highest rank; high mountains and lofty hills for kingdoms, republics, states, cities; towers and fortresses for defenders and protectors, whether

* Isaiah ii. 10-13.

by counsel or by strength, in peace or war; ships of Tarshish, and works of art, and inventions employed in adorning them, for merchants, men enriched by commerce, and abounding in all the luxuries and elegancies of life.’*

This rule, which the inspired writers universally follow in the use of their metaphors, accounts for the animated address of the prophet:—‘Howl, fir-tree, for the cedar is fallen, because the mighty are spoiled. Howl, O ye oaks of Bashan, for the forest of the vintage is come down.’† The power of the nations whom Jehovah dispossessed, to plant his chosen people in their stead, is most beautifully illustrated by the same figures:—‘Yet destroyed I the Amorite before them, whose height was like the height of the cedars, and he was strong as the oaks; yea, I destroyed his fruit from above, and his roots from beneath.’‡ We may judge of the high estimation, in which the oaks of these mountains were held, from a clause in the prophecies of Ezekiel, where, in describing the power and wealth of ancient Tyre, he says, ‘Of the oaks of Bashan have they made thine oars.’§

Bashan, for the extent and luxuriance of its pastures, and for the superior breed of its flocks and herds, was the boast of shepherds and the pride of Jordan: therefore, continues the prophet, ‘A voice of the howling of the shepherds, for their glory is spoiled; a voice of the roaring of young lions, for the pride of Jordan is spoiled.’ So renowned were the pastures of this country, that, when the prophet Micah foretels the restoration of his people, and their rapid prosperity under the fostering care of Jehovah, he cries out, ‘Let them feed in Bashan and in Gilead, as in days of old.’|| The prophet Jeremiah, in his description of the same scene, adopts the figure of Micah, with little variation; a strong additional proof of the great estimation in which

* Lowth's *Isalah*, vol. ii. pp. 33, 34.

† Amos ii. 9.

§ Ezekiel xxvii. 6.

† Zech. xi. 2.

|| Micah vii. 14.

the pastures of this country were held among the ancient Jews : ‘ And I will bring Israel again to his habitation, and he shall feed on Carmel and Bashan, and his soul shall be satisfied upon mount Ephraim and Gilead.’* The cattle that grazed on these verdant mountains, were remarkable for their size, their strength, and fatness. Moses, in his dying song, makes ‘ butter of kine, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats with the fat of kidneys of wheat,’ a distinguished part of that inheritance which God bestowed on his peculiar people. The oppressors of Israel are frequently compared to the strong and fierce cattle reared in the same region :—‘ Strong bulls of Bashan,’ cried the Psalmist in the name of the Saviour, ‘ have beset me round.’† When God announced his fearful judgments by the mouth of Ezekiel, an invitation is addressed to the fowls of heaven, and the beasts of the field :—‘ Gather yourselves together on every side to my sacrifice, that I do sacrifice for you, a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh and drink blood. Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of lambs, of rams, and of goats, of bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan.’‡ Amos uses the same figure in reproving Israel for oppression :—‘ Hear this word, ye kine of Bashan that are in the mountain of Samaria, which oppress the poor, which crush the needy, which say to their masters, Bring and let us drink.’§

Salmon is a mountain which stood in the neighbourhood of Shechem, whose declivities were clothed with lofty woods, and its summits capped with snow. The two first circumstances are verified by a passage in the book of Judges, which is couched in these terms :—‘ And it was told Abimelech, that all the men of the tower of Shechem were gathered together. And Abi-

* Jeremiah l. 19.

† Ezekiel xxxix. 17, 18.

‡ Psalm xxii. 12.

§ Amos iv. 1.

melech gat him up to mount Zalmon, he and all the people that were with him ; and Abimelech took an axe in his hand, and cut down a bough from the trees, and took it, and laid it on his shoulder, and said to the people that were with him, 'What ye have seen me do, make haste, and do as I have done. And all the people likewise cut down every man his bough.* The last circumstance is mentioned by David, in a passage which has not been generally well understood :—' When the Almighty scattered kings in it, it was white as snow in Salmon.† The venerable Henry, in his excellent Commentary, thinks the royal bard refers to the church, and renders the words, ' When the Almighty scattered kings in her, she was white or purified, as snow in Salmon.' But the common translation is perfectly correct ; and the inspired writer seems to refer not to the church, but to the means which God employed in defeating her enemies. The scene to which the Psalmist alludes, is the discomfiture of the Amorites, by a miraculous storm of hail, which Joshua thus describes :—' And the Lord discomfited them before Israel, and slew them with a great slaughter in Gibeon, and chased them along the way that goeth up to Beth-horon, and smote them to Azekah, and to Makedah. And it came to pass as they fled before Israel, and were in the going down to Beth-horon, that the Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died : they were more who died with hailstones, than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.‡ These great and most destructive hailstones appear to have covered all the ground from Beth-horon, a town which lay in the south border of the tribe of Ephraim, unto Azekah, which is mentioned in the book of Joshua, among the cities of the tribe of Judah, ' and made it as white as the top of Salmon.'§

[Mounts Ebal and Gerizim lay in the province of

* Judges ix. 47-49.

† Psalm lxxviii. 14.

‡ Joshua x. 10, 11.

§ Wells' Historical Geography, vol. i. p. 360.

Samaria, and were separated from each other by a valley of about 500 yards wide. 'These hills,' says Dr Robinson, 'rise in steep rocky precipices immediately from the valley on each side, apparently some 800 feet in height. The sides of both these mountains were, to our eyes, naked and sterile; although some travellers have chosen to describe Gerizim as fertile, and confine the sterility to Ebal. The only exception in favour of the former, so far as we could perceive, is a small ravine coming down opposite the west end of the town, which, indeed, is full of mountains and trees; in other respects, both mountains are desolate, except that a few olive-trees are scattered upon them. The side of the northern mountain (Ebal) along the foot, is full of ancient excavated sepulchres. One half of the Hebrew people were commanded to assemble on the brow of Gerizim, and the other half on that of the opposite hill Ebal, to hear the law, and to respond to the blessings and the curses it pronounced on all as they should obey or violate its solemn injunctions,*—an order which was attended to with most scrupulous fidelity by Joshua, who soon after the introduction of the people into Canaan, convened them on the place appointed. It was on Gerizim that Jotham, in remonstrating with the people of Shechem for their barbarous treatment of his father's family, delivered the most ancient parable on record.†]

The hill of Samaria is fine, large, and insulated, rising in terraces to a great height, and compassed all round by a broad deep valley, which is surrounded by four hills, one on each side, cultivated in terraces up to the top, sown with grain, and planted with fig and olive-trees, as is also the valley.‡ In the mountainous chain, called the mountains of Israel or Ephraim, and forming the loftiest peak in the ridge, is the rock Rimmon,§ now called Quarantama, supposed to have been

* Deuteronomy xxvii. 12, 13.

† Judges ix. 7.

‡ Richardson's Travels, vol. ii. p. 413.

§ Judges xx. 45, 47.

the scene of our Lord's temptation. It stands in a wild, lonely, barren desert, interrupted by bleak and precipitous hills, 'so torn and disordered,' to use the words of Maundrell, 'as if the earth had here suffered some great convulsion.']

It only remains now to take notice of the mountains or hills, in or near Jerusalem, which occur in the sacred history of the Old Testament. The celebrated mountain of Zion, on whose summit stood the city of David, and where the ark of the covenant rested under the tent which that pious monarch had pitched for it, has the first claim on our attention. This hill, which, according to Chateaubriand, is of a yellowish colour, rises to the height of 360 feet, by a gradual ascent on the north. On the south and west the rise is abrupt and steep, giving the mountain, as seen from the valley of Hinnom, which winds round it in a south-westerly direction, the appearance of greater elevation than actually belongs to it, while the eastern side 'slopes down steeply, but not in general abruptly, to the Tyropœon, which separates it from the narrow ridge south of the Haram;* and at the extreme south-east part below Siloam, it extends quite down to the valley of Jehoshaphat;—along the western brow, its summit presents a level tract of considerable extent.† From the presence of the ark, it is frequently styled in the book of Psalms, the holy hill. It is sometimes used in Scripture, to denote the whole city of Jerusalem; and, by consequence, the mount Moriah, on which, in times of very remote antiquity, Abraham offered up his son; and in an age long posterior, the temple of Jehovah was built to be the centre of his worship and

* *i. e.* the Grand Mosque.

† The height of this hill is very small, for Jerusalem is on every side, except towards the north, overlooked by hills higher than the one whereon it stands. When about mid-way up mount Olivet, you are on a level with the city walls; and the disparity towards the south is still greater.—*Carne's Letters from the East*, vol. i. p. 302.—*Editor.*

the place of his rest. The holy hill of Zion stood, according to some writers, in the north part of Jerusalem ; but the more probable and general opinion is, that it is the same hill which is taken for Zion in modern times, situated on the south of the present city, for the most part without the walls.* But when Jerusalem was in the height of her power and splendour, in the reigns of Solomon and David, mount Zion was enclosed within the walls, and formed the southern district of that celebrated metropolis. Before it was taken by David from the Jebusites, as has been formerly observed, it seems to have been a kind of citadel ; for it is expressly called the fort or the strong hold of Zion. It was higher than the hill on which old Jerusalem was built ; for this appears to be the hill which Josephus distinguishes by the name of Akra ; and he says expressly, that the hill on which the upper city stood, was higher. But the upper city is allowed by all to be the same with the city of David ; and the Scripture asserts the city of David to be the same with the stronghold of Zion.†

[‘ At the time,’ says Dr Richardson, ‘ when I visited this sacred ground, one part of it supported a crop of barley, another was undergoing the labour of the plough, and the soil turned up consisted of stone and lime, mixed with earth, such as is usually met with in the foundations of ruined cities. It is nearly a mile in circumference, is highest on the west side, and towards the east falls down in broad terraces on the upper part of the mountain, and narrow ones on the side as it slopes down towards the brook Kidron. Each terrace is divided from the one above it by a low wall of dry stone, built of the ruins of this celebrated spot. The terraces near the bottom of the hill are still used as gardens, and are watered from the pool of Siloam.

* Only about one-half, the northerly, is included within the walls of the modern Jerusalem.—*Editor*.

† Wells’ Hist. Geog. vol. ii. p. 39 ; Richardson’s Trav. vol. ii. p. 353.

We have here a remarkable instance of the special fulfilment of prophecy, 'Therefore shall Zion for your sakes be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps.'* Akra is on the north of Zion, its towering peak terminating the ridge of high land which runs down from the head of the valley of Hinnom into the north-west quarter of the city. In a north-easterly direction from Akra stands Bozetha, described by Josephus as higher than any of the adjacent hills, and directly east from Akra is mount Moriah, an elevated rock, covered with the extensive buildings of the temple. The site of that splendid edifice is now occupied by the mosque of Omar, but from the great elevation of the modern street where it stands, the hill is now somewhat shorn of its honours as the loftiest eminence adjoining the city. Its towering height, however, which made it a conspicuous object in the distance,† was the circumstance which gave it originally the name of Moriah, or the hill of vision; at first that designation comprehended all the adjacent heights on which the city was built, but afterwards the honour of that venerable name was limited to the summit on which the temple displayed its colossal grandeur. It stands in the centre of a groupe of hills, which surround it in the form of an amphitheatre,‡ and it was chiefly to this position, under the special blessing of God, that it stood firm and immovable amid the frequent earthquakes that agitated and ravaged the holy land.§]

The only other eminence deserving of notice is the mount of Olives; a name certainly derived from the number of olive-trees with which it was covered. It is now called *Jebel et Tour*. It lay on the east side of Jerusalem, a little out of the city, commanding a full view of that metropolis, from which it was separated by the brook Kidron, and the valley of Jehoshaphat. It is a part of a long ridge of

* Micah iii. 12.

† Psalm cxxv. 2.

‡ Gen. xxii. 2-4.

§ Psalm xlv. 2, 3.

hills, extending from north to south, with three summits. Josephus reckons its distance from the city to be about five furlongs ; which is most probably to be understood of the nearest part, or bottom of the mountain in that direction. The statement of the historian is therefore quite reconcileable with the narrative of the inspired writer, who makes it a sabbath day's journey distant from Jerusalem, or eight furlongs ; for the evangelist, in all probability, refers to that part of the mountain from whence our Lord ascended into heaven, which is supposed to be the central elevation.

In Maundrell's account of his visit to this mountain,* we are informed, that going out of Jerusalem at St Stephen's gate, and crossing the valley of Jehoshaphat, he and his party began immediately to ascend. About two thirds of the way up, they came to certain grottoes cut with intricate windings, and caverns under ground ; these are called the sepulchres of the prophets. A little higher, are twelve arched vaults under ground, standing side by side ; these were built in memory of the twelve apostles, and where tradition says, they compiled their creed. But leaving the uncertain tales of tradition, as unworthy of further notice, it may be observed, that it was here that David, in his flight from the unnatural conspiracy of Absalom, went up weeping as he went up,† and that on the most unexceptionable authority the mount of Olives became famous in the history of the Saviour. To this mountain, it was his custom to retire in the evening, after he had spent a laborious day in teaching the multitudes that attended his ministry in Jerusalem ; it was from one of its summits that he beheld the city, and wept over it, and predicted its final destruction ; in the garden which lay at the bottom, he commenced the scene of his last sufferings for the sins of his people ; and from the highest peak, as is generally supposed, after he had finished the work of our redemption on

* Journey, &c. p. 102.

† 2 Samuel xv. 30.

earth, he ascended into his father's presence with unspeakable joy and glory.

[In some parts of the Mount there are bold declivities, but its general character is gentle, undulating, and easy of passage: a lovelier walk cannot be imagined, than one of the paths that leads over it. 'Not the sublime heights of Lebanon, the more rich and soothing landscapes of Carmel, the bold and graceful front of Tabor, so affect the imagination and bring up the immortal visions of the past, as the forsaken breast of Olivet. The wild and indelible aspect of nature, the valley, the rock, the river, are still unchanged; the curse that swept away the labours of prince and peasant, the temple and altar, has left unchanged the places where the prophet and apostle wandered, and the Redeemer retired to pray for the world he came to save. The spot at the foot of the hill is still marked as the garden of Gethsemane; its eight large and very ancient olive-trees are seen standing alone; a low fence separates it from the road. This place is justly shown as the scene of our Lord's agony the night before his crucifixion, both from the circumstance of the name it retains, and its situation with regard to the city. The sceptic has never presumed to doubt the identity of this memorable spot, whose situation is one of the most solemn, and, it may be said, romantic, that can be conceived. Above are the heights of Olivet; on the right and left is the vale of Jehoshaphat; and directly in front are the gloomy walls of Jerusalem, covering the crest of mount Zion, and sweeping their heavy battlements and towers above the vale, till lost to the sight as they wind above the descent of Hinnom. The palm groves are gone, so is the cedar, the sycamore, and the fig-tree. The olive is the only tree on its bosom.* 'The olive,' says Dr Clarke, 'is still found growing in patches at the foot of the mount as a spontaneous product, uninterruptedly resulting

* Carne's Views in Syria.

from the original growth of this part of the mountain ; it is impossible to view even these trees with indifference. Titus cut down all the wood in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, but there would seem to have been constantly springing up a succession of the hardy trees. It is truly a curious and interesting fact, that during a period of little more than two thousand years, Hebrews, Assyrians, Romans, Moslems, and Christians, have been successively in possession of the rocky mountains of Palestine, yet the olive still vindicates its paternal soil, and is found at this time upon the same spot, which was called by the Hebrew writers mount Olivet, and the mount of Olives, eleven centuries before the Christian era.* ‘ It is indeed,’ says Dr Richardson, ‘ very far from being improbable these trees may have arisen from the roots of the ancient trees which Titus cut down, because the olive is very long lived, and possesses the peculiar property of shooting up again, however frequently it may be cut down. The trees now standing in the Garden of Gethsemane are of the species known to botanists as the *Olea Europæa* ; they are wild olives, and appear pollarded from extreme age, and their stems are very rough and knarled ; they are highly venerated here—any attempt to cut or injure them would be deemed an act of profanation. Should any one be known to pluck any of the leaves, he would incur a sentence of excommunication from the Roman Church. Of the stones of the olives, beads are made, which the monks of the Zion convent regard as one of the most sacred objects that can be presented to the christian traveller.’

[Calvary, a small eminence on the north-west of Jerusalem, so called either from its supposed resemblance to a skull, from the tradition that Adam’s skull was found in it, or more probably from its being strewed with those frail remnants of mortality,—being a place of public execution. Its interest in the mind of the christian

* Zechariah xiv. 4.

reader arises solely from its being the spot where the Divine Saviour expiated by his death the sins of the world. The infamous purpose to which this place was devoted, determines the situation to have been without the walls of Jerusalem. In consequence, however, of the modern city having gradually extended in a north-westerly direction, Calvary now occupies almost the centre of the town, while, strange reverse, Zion, on which the ancient capital of Judea was founded, is thrust beyond the walls. Although Calvary is but a very inconsiderable elevation, it has, from a venerable antiquity, been dignified by the name of Mount. Although, as Dr Robinson says, 'in the New Testament there is no hint that Golgotha was a hillock, and neither Eusebius, Cyril, Jerome, nor the historians of the fourth and fifth centuries speak of it as a mount, yet the expression easily became current, and has been adopted into every language of Christendom.' This spot, pre-eminent among the sacred places that lie in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, has been in every age since the passion of Christ, viewed with deeply opposite sentiments by the friends and foes of Christianity,—has been an object of pious pilgrimage to the one, and of studied execration to the other,—has been surmounted with churches in honour of the Redeemer, and polluted by statues of idols to pour insult on his memory and his claims.' But without entering into historical details of the splendid decorations heaped upon it in successive ages by the zeal of mistaken devotees, or the Gothic barbarities by which these were frequently pilaged and laid in ruins, there is one circumstance by which the memorable event, which, eighteen hundred years ago, was transacted on Calvary, is attested by the hand of Omnipotent power, too important and striking to be passed without notice. The fissure made in the rock, still remains to arrest the eye of the traveller, and furnish a standing evidence of the truth. 'A gentleman who travelled through Palestine told me,' says

Fleming, 'that an ingenious person, his fellow traveller, who was a deist, used to make merry with all the stories that the Romish priests entertained them with, as to the sacred places and relics they went to see; and particularly when they first showed him the clefts of Mount Calvary, which is now included within the great dome that was built over it by Constantine the Great. But when he came to examine the clefts more narrowly and critically, he told his fellow travellers that now he began to be a Christian; for, said he, I have long been a student of nature and the mathematics, and I am sure these clefts and rents in this rock were never made by a natural or ordinary earthquake; for by such a concussion the rock must have split according to the veins, and where it was weakest in the adhesion of parts; for thus, said he, I have observed it to have been done in other rocks, when separated or broken after an earthquake; and reason tells me it must always be so. But it is quite otherwise here, for the rock is split athwart, and cross the veins in a most strange and supernatural manner. This, therefore, I can easily and plainly see to be the effect of a real miracle, which neither nature nor art could have effected; and therefore I thank God that I came hither to see this standing monument of a miraculous power, by which God gives evidence to this day of the divinity of Christ.*']

To the hill of Zion, and the other mountains around, the sacred writers frequently and triumphantly allude. The references are so easy, as to occasion no difficulty; and so numerous, that only one or two can be quoted. The first is a beautiful allusion to the situation of Jerusalem, environed with mountains and rocks, which oppose a powerful barrier to the incursions of an enemy; 'They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever; as the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is

* Fleming's Christology.

round about his people, from henceforth even for ever.’* The description which Volney gives of his approach to Jerusalem, furnishes no contemptible illustration of these verses ; and as it is pleasant to compel an avowed infidel to illustrate and confirm the religion of Christ, which he detests, I shall subjoin his account. ‘Two days’ journey south of Nablous, following the direction of the mountains, which gradually become more rocky and barren, we arrive at a town, which, like many others already mentioned, presents a striking example of the vicissitude of human affairs : when we behold its walls levelled, its ditches filled up, and all its buildings embarrassed with ruins, we scarcely can believe we view that celebrated metropolis, which formerly baffled the efforts of the most powerful empires, and for a time resisted the efforts of Rome herself ; though by a whimsical change of fortune, its ruins now receive her homage and reverence : in a word, we with difficulty recognise Jerusalem. Nor is our astonishment less, to think of its ancient greatness, when we consider its situation amidst a rugged soil, destitute of water, and surrounded by dry channels of torrents and steep heights. Distant from every great road, it seems neither to have been calculated for a considerable mart of commerce, nor the centre of a great consumption. It however overcame every obstacle, and may be adduced as a proof of what popular opinion may effect, in the hands of an able legislature, or when favoured by happy circumstances.’† The proud unbeliever had found a shorter and easier road to his conclusion, in the volume of inspiration ; and particularly in the passages quoted above, from the Psalms of David, who refers the singular prosperity of Jerusalem to the peculiar favour of Heaven. This was the real source of her greatness, and it was this alone, and not the natural strength of her situation, nor the skill and valour of her defenders, which enabled her so long to

* Psalm cxxv. 2

† Volney’s Trav. vol. ii. pp. 175, 196.

baffle the designs of her enemies. This important and instructive truth the royal Psalmist acknowledges in the other passage to which I alluded, in the liveliest strains of devout gratitude :—‘ Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great king. For lo, the kings were assembled, they passed by together, they saw it, so they marvelled : they were troubled ; they hasted away. Fear took hold upon them there, and pain as of a woman in travail.’* Behind the walls and bulwarks of salvation, contrived by the wisdom, and appointed by the distinguishing love, of Jehovah, that highly favoured people, so long as they remained faithful to the covenant of their God, reposed in safety, and laughed at the shaking of the hostile spear : but when they forsook the service of Jehovah, for the worship of dumb idols, the impenetrable shield of divine favour and protection was withdrawn, and they became an easy prey to the invader ; or, if, listening only to their own furious passions and infatuated counsels, they resisted his efforts for a time, it was only to aggravate their sufferings, and render their destruction more certain and complete.

[‘ It is not difficult to conceive,’ says Mr Jowett, observing from this spot the various undulations and slopes of the ground, ‘ that when mount Zion, Akra, and mount Moriah constituted the bulk of the city, with a deep and steep valley surrounding the greater part of it, it must have been considered by the people of that age as nearly impregnable. It stands beautiful for situation ! It is indeed builded as a city that is compact together.† The kings of the earth, and all the inhabitants of the world, would not have believed that the adversary and the enemy should have entered into the gates of Jerusalem.‡ This was said nearly two thousand years ago ; and when, six hundred and fifty years after, Titus besieged and took this devoted

* Psalm xlviii. 2-6.

† Psalm cxxii. 3.

‡ Lament. iv. 12.

city, he exclaimed, on viewing the vast strength of the place :—" We have certainly had God for our assistant in this war ; and it was no other than God who ejected the Jews out of these fortifications ; for what could the hands of men or any machines do towards overthrowing these towers ? " * *

[The mountains of Palestine, of which the principal heights have been described in the preceding pages, and all of which belong to two great chains, which, though shooting out here and there into irregular branches, run through the whole length of the land on the east and west side of Jordan, form so prominent a feature in the natural condition of the country, that there is no wonder they particularly arrested the eye of Moses, in the distant prospect of the promised land he obtained from the summit of Pisgah ; and accordingly, in allusion to the mountainous character of Israel's inheritance, he says in his exquisite song, that ' God made them to ride on the high places of the earth.' † Many others of the inspired writers, especially the poets, have given an undying celebrity to the hills of their native land ; and, indeed, so often embellish their themes with images borrowed from their wild and romantic scenery, that

' Not a mountain rears its head unsung,'

or has not been enlisted, by their fervid imaginations, in the sacred service of religion. But it is not merely in the way of passing allusion, and as serving the purpose of poetic embellishment, that the mountains of Palestine are introduced in Scripture. The scenes of the sacred story are frequently laid in the ' hill country ;' and the lights and shadows of Hebrew life, the adventures of the patriarchs, the holy zeal of the prophets, the most impressive records of piety, the most searching trials of faith, memorable contests in the

* Jowett's *Christian Researches in Syria*, &c., p. 256.—*Editor*.

† Deut. xxxii. 13.

cause of the true and living God, as well as the dark rites of idolatry that were practised in ages of religious decline, are, in the mind of every reader of the Bible, associated with the 'high places of the land.' Owing to their elevated position, and the solitude they afforded, the summits of the mountains were, from the earliest times, chosen as localities best suited for the services of religion. Not only was the temple itself erected on the top of a mount, but good men, on various occasions, when engaged in private devotion, raised altars on such eminences for the worship of God, as appears from the instances of Abraham, Gideon, and Manoah ;* and the same practice was continued in idolatrous times, the polluted rites of Baal being practised in the consecrated groves with which their sides were thickly covered.† Besides, in the frequent wars which the Israelites had to wage with the hostile tribes on their borders, the fastnesses of the mountains afforded a secure and secret asylum ; and when unequal, from their small numbers or dispirited state, to meet the enemy in the open field, they had it always in their power to occupy an advantageous position on the heights, from which neither force nor stratagem could avail to dislodge them. Thus, when Samson dreaded the vengeance of the Philistines, after burning their corn and massacring a number of the people, he fortified himself in the rock Etam.‡ Thus, when the Benjamites were defeated and nearly annihilated by the Israelites of the other tribes, they established themselves beyond the reach of danger in the rock Rimmon,§ and thus too the Philistines were encamped in the clefts of the rocks Bozez and Seneh, which Jonathan climbed up when he made his attack upon their garrison.||

* Genesis xxii. ; Judges vi. 19-21 ; xiii. 15-20 ; 1 Kings xviii. 19.

† Isaiah lvii. 7 ; Ezekiel xviii. 6.

‡ Judges xv. 8.

§ Judges xx. 47.

|| 1 Samuel xiv. 4 : see also Deut. xxxii. 37 ; 1 Samuel xxiii. 25 ; Job xxiv. 8 ; Psalm xxxi. 2, 3 ; Jeremiah xlix. 14 ; Obad. 3 ; Isaiah xxxiii. 16 ; Jeremiah iv. 29. Rocks are still resorted to in the East as places

[Among the limestone mountains of Palestine are found numerous caverns, some natural, others artificial, excavations, in which the ancient inhabitants sought additional security from the sudden and tumultuary irruptions of their enemies. Those situated at the base, or in low and level ground, were often found to be places of precarious concealment, owing to the torrents, which, descending with resistless impetuosity, poured their overwhelming stream into these hollow receptacles, and exposed their occupants to a far worse calamity than the attacks of a human foe. But those caves, the entrance of which was on the brow of the hills, were beyond the reach of the most violent inundations; and, accordingly, in those covert recesses, the Israelites generally took shelter on occasions of sudden alarm or aggression from their restless neighbours. Hence, to go into the holes of the rocks, and the caves of the earth for fear of the Lord, 'was a figurative expression, familiarly used among that people to denote a season of great consternation and danger.'* Some of these rocky caverns were of prodigious dimensions, as that of Adullam, which was capable of containing 400 men,† and that of Engedi, which was so spacious, that Saul, though occupying the same retreat, had no suspicion that David, the object of his deadly hatred and his indefatigable pursuit, lay there concealed with

of refuge, and some of them, says De la Roque, are even capable of sustaining a siege. In proof of which he says, that the Grand Seigneur, wishing to seize the person of the Emir Fahreddin, prince of the Druses, gave orders to the pacha to take him prisoner; he accordingly came in search of him with a new army in the district of Chuef, which is part of mount Lebanon, wherein, in the village of Gesin, and close to it, is the rock which served for a retreat to the emir. It is named in Arabic, Magara Gesin, *i. e.* the Cavern of Gesin, by which name it is famous. The pacha pressed the emir so closely, that this unfortunate prince was obliged to shut himself in the cleft of a great rock with a small number of his officers. The pacha besieged him there several months, and was going to blow up the rock by a mine, when the emir capitulated, p. 205.—*Editor.*

* Isaiah ii. 19; Rev. vi. 15, 16.

† 1 Sam. xxii. 1, 2.

600 of his followers.* These vast caverns, at a later period, were haunts of formidable gangs of banditti, who scoured the neighbouring country, and levied heavy contributions upon the inhabitants. In the time of Josephus, many of them were infested by tenants of this lawless description, who, from the inaccessible position of their strongholds, long eluded the vigilance of

* 1 Samuel xxiv. 1: see also Gen. xix. 30. The cave of Engedi is thus described by Pococke:—"Beyond the valley of Tekoa, there is a very large grotto, which the Arabs call El Maanah, a hiding place, the high rocks on each side are almost perpendicular; and the way to the grotto is by a terrace formed in the rock, which is very narrow; there are two entrances into it, we went by the farthest, which leads to a narrow passage into a very large grotto, the rock being supported by natural pillars; the top of it rises in several places like domes; it is perfectly dry; there is a tradition, that the people of the country, to the number of 30,000, once retired to this cave to avoid a pestilence. This place is so strong, that one would imagine it to be one of the strongholds of Engedi to which David and his men fled from Saul; and probably it is that very cave in which he cut off Saul's skirt, for David and his men might with great ease be hid there, and not be seen by him."—*Trav.* vol. ii. p. 41. 'About an hour's journey south-east from Bethlehem,' says Mr Munro, 'we reached the foot of the mountain on the eastern side of which the cave of Engedi is situated. The ascent is not difficult, though marked by no path, and the mountain, one of the loftiest in the neighbourhood, presenting a strong and well-chosen "hold." Upon the summit are the foundations of a thick wall, composed of large stones, closing a quadrangular space, and which is a reservoir for water; and on the western side of it the ground is raised in a semicircular form. A cistern no doubt has existed here from the earliest times, at which the flocks were wont to be watered, and which gave the name to the place; since Engedi in the Hebrew signifies "the kid's fountain." The cave, a little below the summit, had its entrance four and a half feet high, and something wider, carefully closed up with stones previously to their returning into the desert. Having pulled down the wall, I found the length of the interior to be about sixty feet. In the highest part it was eight feet, but in most places less than five. It is, however, much choked with rubbish, and although a natural cavern, seems to have had its surface smoothed by cutting. The mountain to which it belongs stands on the western border of the desert, commanding a view of the Dead Sea to the south-east.'—*Vere Munro*, vol. ii. p. 261. Dr Robinson, however, is of opinion, that this is not the cave of Engedi, which is much farther to the south-east on the shores of the Dead Sea, corresponding to Ain Gidy of the Arabs, which he thinks is a corruption of Engedi.—*Editor*.

the public authorities, as well as the vengeance of the exasperated populace, till Herod at length succeeded in ridding the country for a time of these daring marauders.* In the days of our Lord, as appears from the parable of the good Samaritan, down to the present day, these caverns, especially near Bethlehem, have been the hiding-places of such outlaws; and, it is supposed, by many commentators, that our Lord, when, in reproving the Jewish leaders for their mercenary and unscrupulous profanation of the temple, he charged them as robbers with defrauding God of his claims to that house of prayer, had his eye upon those 'dens of thieves.'

[*Valleys.*—The vast chains of mountains that diversify the surface of Palestine are naturally accompanied by large tracts of low and level ground; and from the regular course in which these continuous ridges run from north to south, the principal valleys and plains of this country extend also in a parallel direction. But as many a break occurs in the numerous arms of the mountains, many a narrow gorge, opening through those towering eminences, seemingly to afford only a pass to the traveller, or a channel to some paltry brook, stretches out into a wide and fertile wady. An infinite number of small natural basins, of great beauty and productiveness, are concealed in the heart of the highland solitudes, and these generally lie in a direction from east to west, or from west to east. In a hilly region, level tracts, even of inconsiderable extent, attract more notice, and are held in greater value, than in a champagne country; and accordingly

* 'As the caves,' says Josephus, 'were in the middle of craggy and perpendicular cliffs, which could not be approached either by climbing up or creeping down, Herod caused iron chains to be suspended from an engine erected at the top of the mountain, and chests full of armed men to be lowered down to the mouth of the cave, who, with long hooks, drew out the robbers and killed them, some by the sword, others by dashing them down amongst the sharp rocks.—*Antiq. b. xiv. ch. 15, sect. 5*: see also Clarke's Trav. vol. iv. 421; Robinson's Bib. Resear. vol. ii. p. 211.—*Editor*.

every one of the paltriest plains in Palestine is distinguished by its appropriate name in the present day, as seems to have been the case also in ancient times, many of these having been preserved in the sacred record, more from the events of historic interest with which they are associated, than from their natural fertility or political importance.

[The territory that lies between the shores of the Mediterranean and the western chain of Lebanon, which, under various appellations, runs through the length of the land, from Antaradous to the most southern boundary of Palestine, a distance of about four degrees of latitude, may be described generally as an extensive plain, with a low and undulating surface. Its greatest breadth may be estimated at twenty miles, but in some places it is indented into narrow valleys by bays of the sea, and in others its continuity is interrupted by arms of the hills which stretch out westward, and form bold promontories as at Carmel. This seaward plain is distinguished for its extraordinary productiveness; and were it not for the inauspicious influence of Turkish ignorance and oppression, would be one of the most fertile and lovely spots in all Syria.

[The valley of Abilene, which lies on this western coast, between Râs en Nakûra and Acre, is a narrow strip of land, bounded on all sides except one by an amphitheatre of low hills, and is exceedingly fertile.

[The valley of Zebulun, which commences immediately south of Acre, and stretches in a south easterly direction, including the plain of Acre on the coast, is environed by hills which give it an elliptical form, and is about four miles long and one broad. The numerous springs and rivulets, which diffuse a perennial moisture, as well as the thick plantations of oak and carob-trees which cover the tops of the adjoining hills, render this plain exceedingly fruitful, and yield the finest pasturage in the land. In ancient times, it was possessed by an

industrious rural tribe, who kept it in a high state of cultivation ; and even still, in spite of the inauspicious influence of Turkish ignorance and oppression, the luxuriant crops of vegetables and fruits, with which its level fields are adorned, bear testimony to the strong natural capabilities of the soil.

The valley of Sepphoris, or Diocesarea, now Sephûrieh, lies on the east of the former, from which it is separated by a ridge of hills, and is nearly of the same extent. This vale, which is always beautiful, is said to be invested with incomparable charms in the spring season, presenting the appearance of one rich, well cultivated, continuous garden, embellished with an inexhaustible profusion of flowers of the loveliest tints, and dressed with the most careful industry, rather than of an open plain, that owes all its gay luxuriance to the liberal and artless hand of nature. What has given additional importance to this little plain, is, that it has frequently been the scene of military encampments,—immediately before the time of Christ, when the city from which it derives its name fell before the arms of Herod,—in 399 of the Christian era, when this city, in consequence of a rebellion of the Jews, was laid in ashes by the Roman army,—in the time of the Crusaders, when those fanatic warriors assembled their troops in this valley previous to the fatal battle of Hattin,—and a few days after, when Saladin, the conquering hero of that field, halted his men on the same valley on their march to Akka.

[The valley of Nazareth, situated a little to the south-east of Sepphoris, is a small but extremely beautiful basin, enclosed by a circle of dwarfish hills. ‘ It seems,’ to use the words of Richardson, ‘ as if fifteen mountains met to form one enclosure for this delightful spot ; they rise around it like the edge of a shell, to guard it from intrusion. It is a rich and beautiful field in the midst of barren mountains. It abounds in fig-trees, small gardens, and hedges of the prickly

pear ; and the dense grass affords abundant pasture.*

[South of Carmel, and reaching along the coast as far as Jaffa, is the valley of Sharon, proverbial in ancient times for the beauty of its scenery, and the uncommon excellence of its pasturage ; and the white clover, the dwarfish tulips, the *cistus roseus*, and the infinite variety of wild shrubs and flowers, that spring spontaneously on every side, displaying a scene of surpassing beauty, amply support its claims to ancient renown. 'It was covered,' says Buckingham, 'with a carpet of the richest verdure we had seen.' 'This tract of land,' says Mr Monro, 'glorious as it is to the eye, is yet deficient in water, in its central part, and, for this reason, appears not to be frequented even by the Arabs ; I traversed it for hours without noticing a single tent. The grass and the flowers spring to waste their sweetness and to fall unseen. The soil is light, and the surface elastic ; and the uneven foreground swells into hills to the east, which are backed by the mountains of Samaria beyond. I could not help thinking how many a Leicestershire gentleman would cast a covetous eye over this country, would mark it out with posts and rails, root up the *cistus*, and plant a little gorse.'†

[The seaward plain from Jaffa to the borders of the desert, possesses the general character of low and level sand, and, except a few tracts towards the shore, is very fertile, and frequently beautified with fields of grain, and orchards stocked with olive, pomegranate, orange, lemon, and fig trees. The soil consists of a fat brown garden mould, and is so extremely light, that almost the only tillage required is the scratch of a plough, whose simplicity of construction is such, that the husbandman carries it on his shoulder to and from the scene of his labours.

[The plain of Esdraelon, which is sometimes called

* Trav. in the Levant, vol. ii. p. 434.

† Summer Ramble in Syria, vol. i. p. 76.

also in Scripture, the plain of Jezreel and the valley of Megiddo,* and is now known among the Arabs by the name of Merj Ibn Amir, is a very noble expanse, lying between the mountains of Galilee and Samaria. The boundary which separates it from the great southern plain on the coast, is the prolongation of Carmel, which extends in a south easterly direction, till it is joined by a range of low hills, which gradually rising to a greater height and importance form the mountains of Samaria. Its northern barrier from the lofty peak of Tabor on the east is formed by an abrupt and precipitous ridge, which sinks into a range of lower hills, as it approaches Carmel, and forms the narrow valley through which the Kishon flows to the Mediterranean. Its eastern portion is too irregular to be traced by any definite boundary, and in that quarter it shoots out into three branches or offsets, which run into the valley of the Jordan. The most southerly takes its course by Jenin, along the southern wall of Gilboa. The middle one forms the valley between Gilboa and Little Hermon, and stretches as far as Beisan (Bethshean), while the northern arm, which is the longest and most circuitous, runs up by the eastern side of Tabor to Hattin. What is singular, the waters of the northern and southern branches of the plain of Esdraelon direct their course westward, and swell the Kishon, while the middle one, sloping by a rapid declivity to the east, pours its stream into the Jordan. This great plain, which is thirty miles long, and about twenty at its greatest breadth, thus traverses nearly the whole breadth of Palestine. Toward the eastern extremity, as already described, the surface is slightly undulating, especially where the various and far-spreading ramifications of Gilboa extend, and on the west it declines towards the Mediterranean. But all over its spacious bosom it is perfectly level, and presents from the adjoining eminences, as far as

* Joshua xvii. 16; 2 Chron. xxxv. 22.

the eye can reach, a landscape which, for unbroken continuity, and the splendid variety of scenery, cannot be surpassed or equalled in the Holy Land. At present no forests cover its surface, scarcely a tree is to be seen; it is completely open throughout the whole extent, as if it were one vast meadow. The soil is of the finest quality, consisting of a rich alluvial earth, lying on a substratum of gravel and limestone, and although many parts of it are allowed to remain in a waste and neglected state, so great is its fertility, that Morison and others have pronounced it capable of yielding grain sufficient for the maintenance of all Galilee, even were that province to be filled with all its ancient population. Imagination can without much effort picture to itself what a lovely spot this must once have been, when diversified with clumps of aromatic trees, waving with corn-fields, parcelled into flower and fruit gardens, and interspersed here and there with smiling villages and elegant villas. No wonder that several of the kings of Israel chose it for their summer residence.

[This immense plain is associated with several events of great historical interest. It was here that Barak with 10,000 men fought and routed Sisera.* It was here that Gideon encountered the combined forces of the Midianites and Amalekites.† It was here that the glory of Israel was eclipsed for a time by the sad fall of Saul and Jonathan. It was here that good Josiah, who had taken the field in disguise against Necho, king of Egypt, received a mortal wound, and here the nation of Israel gave utterance to their unfeigned lamentations over the fall of this pious and patriotic prince.‡ In short, the plain of Esdraelon is well entitled to be called 'the battle-ground of nations.' It has been the chosen scene of military encampment in all the great contests that have been

* Judges iv. 14.

† Judges vi. 33.

‡ 2 Chron. xxxv. 22; Zech. xii. 11.

waged in the Holy Land from the age of Nebuchadnezzar (in the history of whose war with Arphaxad it is mentioned,* 'as the great plain of Esdraelon'), until the disastrous march of Napoleon Bonaparte from Egypt in Syria. Jews, Gentiles, Saracens, Egyptians, Persians, Druses, Turks, Arabs, Christians, Crusaders, and Anti-Christian Frenchmen, warriors of every nation under heaven, have pitched their tents in the plain of Esdraelon, and have beheld the various banners of their nations 'wet with the dews of Tabor and Hermon.'

[The plain of Moreh was situated rather more than thirty miles north of Jerusalem. Being a well-watered valley, and bearing good pasturage, it was peculiarly inviting to a nomadic tribe; and accordingly we find Abraham choosing this for an encampment with his immense flocks.†

[The valley of Ajalon, or Gibeon, near the city of that name, is famous as the place where, at the request of Joshua, the moon was miraculously arrested, in order to afford light to the Hebrew army in their pursuit of the confederate princes of Canaan.‡

[The valley of Jehoshaphat is a long, steep, and winding valley, running N.E. by S. between the mount of Olives and the eastern wall of Jerusalem. It gradually widens in some places into a considerable plain, and in others is contracted into a narrow ravine. It is of an irregular form, but its greatest breadth is estimated at about 150 yards. The name by which it is mentioned in Scripture, is that of the brook Kidron,§ and it does bear traces of being occasionally swept over by a large and impetuous stream. But like the other wadys or narrow ravines of Palestine, it appears to serve less as the channel of an actually flowing river, than as a natural conduit for draining off the winter

* Judith i. 8; Clarke's Trav. † Gen. xii. 6. ‡ Josh. x. 12.
§ 2 Sam. xv. 23; 1 Kings xv. 13; 2 Kings xxiii. 6, 12; 2 Chron.
xxix. 16; xxx. 14; John xviii. 1, where it is called Cedron.

rains that pour down the hills ; for, excepting after a heavy fall, the bottom is almost constantly dry. The valley of Jehoshaphat, the name by which it has been called in later ages, is thought to have originated, when pilgrimages began to be made to the Holy Land, in the circumstance that the most conspicuous object in this plain is the magnificent sepulchre of that monarch ; or, more probably, it was founded on the striking passage of Joel, in which that prophet specifies this valley as the destined scene of an eventful dispensation.* The term, as employed by Joel, is considered by the best commentators to be not the name of any particular place, but a figurative allusion to the meaning of the original word,—‘The Lord judgeth,’—and importing that God would judge the heathen who had oppressed Israel, and in some decisive manner overthrow the power of antichrist, at the restoration of the Jews to Palestine. The celebrity of this valley, and much of the interest that attaches to it, has arisen from an erroneous interpretation of this prophecy ; the Mohammedans and Jews believing that in the valley of Jehoshaphat the general resurrection will take place, and the tribunal of God be erected. There is a large projecting stone in the wall of the city, overhanging this valley, on which the followers of Mohammed imagine that their prophet will sit, and bear a prominent part in the proceedings of that final day ; while, with regard to the latter, one of the strongest desires that influences the descendants of Israel, is, that they may be enabled to deposit their bones here. For this purpose, multitudes of aged pilgrims repair to it daily, from the remotest quarters of the world ; and freely does even the grasping hand of a Jew part with his hoarded treasures, to purchase for himself and family the much-valued honour and privilege of a resting-place in this consecrated spot.

* Joel iii. 2.

[As to the physical condition and appearance of this valley, it is very rocky. Although some parts of it are under cultivation, and are adorned here and there with olive and other trees, its bottom is full of stones, and bounded on both sides by continuous rocks, which, throughout nearly the whole length of the valley, are hollowed with sepulchres of various shapes and sizes, from the excavated chamber of yesterday, to tombs that *lay claim* to a remote and venerable antiquity.

[The valley of Hinnom, or, as it is sometimes called in Scripture, Gehennom or Benhennom,—the valley of the sons of Hinnom,—was another of the low grounds that skirted the environs of Jerusalem, winding around the western base of mount Zion by a south-easterly course, and meeting the valley of Jehoshaphat, whose general features it strongly resembles, on an oblong plot of ground called the king's gardens. At one time, this was a delightful valley; indeed, for its gardens, groves, and cool refreshing shade, it was reckoned the Tempe of Palestine. But it was rendered infamous by the horrid rites of Moloch, to whose worship a temple was dedicated here, and infants sacrificed,—to drown whose cries, when the little innocents were locked in the burning embraces of the brazen image, a loud flourish of trumpets and cymbals was constantly kept up; whence the place was called Tophet. Hezekiah and Manasseh, both slaves to this revolting superstition, immolated their sons to the savage divinity.* Josiah, who signalized his reign by proclaiming a war of extermination against idolatry, not only abolished the execrable rites, but destroyed the idol and temple, and stamped this once pleasant valley with lasting infamy, by converting it into one of the common sewers of the city, and a receptacle for dead carcasses, bones, and every kind of pollution. To remove the noxious effluvia which must have emanated from such a mass

* 2 Kings xxiii. 10; 2 Chron. xxviii. 3; Jer. vii. 31.

of putrifying matter, fires were kept constantly to consume it.*

[The valley of Hinnom is also remarkable in the page of Scripture for an occurrence of a very different character. It was the spot where, in the symbolic manner of the prophets, Jeremiah broke the pot of clay, to intimate that as completely as that earthenware vessel was dashed in pieces, so would the guilty city of Jerusalem and its inhabitants be destroyed.†

[Returning to the north of Palestine, we find a great central valley, which runs from north to south in a continuous line, though under different appellations, throughout the whole length of the land. Between the lofty mountain chains of Lebanon and Antilebanon, there is a plain, called in Scripture the valley of Lebanon, by the classics, Cœle-Syria, or the Hollow Syria, and by the Arabs, El-Bekaa, the length of which is estimated at ninety, and the breadth, which, with slight exceptions, is uniform, at eleven miles. The soil, naturally rich and loamy, is well watered by the numerous rivulets which issue from various parts of the hills, and empty themselves in the Lietani (the Leontes of antiquity); and, besides having for the most part a fine exposure on the sloping sides of the enclosing mountains, it enjoys in a high degree all the advantages that can procure for it the character of being pre-eminent for beauty and fertility in this quarter of the world.

[South of El-Bekaa the plain of the Jordan‡ opens, comprehending a territory of not less than from 170 to 180 miles. ‘Throughout its whole course,’ says Dr Richardson, ‘it is bounded by a chain of mountains on each side. On the east they rise almost precipitously from the bed of the river; but on the west there

* From the horrid tortures practised here, and the infamous character of the place, the later Jews were led to apply the name Gehenna to the place of future punishment—the fires of hell.—*Ed.*

† Jer. xix. 1-11.

‡ 1 Kings vii. 46.

is a fine fertile vale, averaging about half or three quarters of a mile broad, between the river and the mountain. This does not apply to the lake of Genesareth, for there the mountains are close to the lake on each side, with here and there a small beautiful vale opening on the west. The mountains on the east are bolder, and continue with little interruption all the way. On the west side the interruptions are frequent, and charming defiles, irrigated by small streams of water, pass off.' Included in this extensive plain, or bordering on it, are several small plains and valleys, which derive all their interest and claims to consideration, from the historical events with which they are associated.—The plain of Jericho, remarkable for its fruitfulness and the intense heat that is there in the summer season.—The valley of Achor in the neighbourhood of Gilgal, where Achan suffered capital punishment.—The valley of Beràchah, not far from Tekoah, was the plain on which, after his miraculous deliverance from the Ammonites, Moabites, and Idumeans, who were made the instruments of mutual destruction, Jehosaphat assembled his forces to offer thanksgiving.*—The valley of Elah, or the Terebinth Vale, ten miles west from Jerusalem, is renowned as the scene of David's successful combat with Goliath. Every thing in the appearance of the valley seems still admirably to correspond with the description of the sacred historian. The opposite declivities, where the respective armies of the Israelites and Philistines were posted, and the little brook from which the youthful champion selected his five smooth stones, are still as distinctly traceable as they were three thousand years ago.—The valley of Salt on the south-west of the Dead Sea, where David overcame the Syrians,† and Amaziah, at a subsequent period, defeated the Edomites.‡ The valley of Siddim, on the site of the Dead

* 2 Chron. xx. 21.

† 1 Chron. xviii. 3.

‡ 2 Kings xiv. 7; 2 Chron. xxv. 11.

Sea, full of bituminous pits, in which Chedorlaomer and his allies perished.—The valley of Rephaim, or the valley of the giants, so called from the uncommon stature of its inhabitants,* was distinguished not less for the superior abundance and quality of its grain,† than for being the theatre of several glorious victories which David and his successors obtained over their ruthless enemies the Philistines.‡—The vale of Hebron, called also the plain of Mamre, famous for being one of the stations, and eventually a sepulchre of the patriarchs, is a spacious and winding valley, encompassed on all sides by mountains. It boasts of a good soil, and where it is not laid out in olive and vineyards, it yields pasturage of the finest quality. There is pointed out a venerable Terebinth or Butm tree, which is held in high estimation, from a traditionary belief among the natives that its spreading branches covered the tent of Abraham.—The valley of Sorek or Eschol, which lay a little further to the southwest, is a deep and extensive plain, famous for the magnificent grapes it produced. The naked and ragged rocks that encircle it, and concentrate the rays of the sun, have contributed, with a naturally rich soil and genial climate, to secure for it, through many centuries, the reputation of the largest grapes, and finest vines in the country. ‘That most fragrant and pleasant valley that ever eye beheld, where,’ to use the words of old Sandys, ‘the grasse wast-high withers, uneaten and unmawed,’ is situated beneath the hills of Amalek and Philistia, to the westward, and ‘concealed from view. The country on both sides is uncommonly fruitful and pleasant. So fertile is the soil, that every plant thrives in it; and so great is the felicity of the climate, that nuts, palms, figs, and olive-trees, flourish here in great profusion, although they naturally require a quite different temperature; which,

* Josh. xv. 8.

† Isaiah xvii. 5.

‡ 2 Samuel v. 22; 1 Chron. xvi. 5; xvi. 9.

observes the historian, looks as if Providence took delight in this place, to reconcile contradictions; and as if the very seasons themselves were in a competition which of them should be most obliging. The durable character of the fruits produced in this charming region, is not less remarkable than their great variety and excellence. Figs and grapes continue in season there ten months in the year; and other fruits the whole year round.]

Lakes.—The only considerable lakes in the land of Promise, are those of Tiberias and the Salt Sea. The lake of Tiberias was also known to the sacred writers by the name of the sea of Galilee, and the lake of Gennesareth. It was called the sea of Tiberias, from a town of that name on its western border; the sea of Galilee, from the province of Galilee in general; and the lake of Gennesareth, from that particular tract of Galilee which skirted its western shore. The breadth of this lake or sea is forty, and the length an hundred, furlongs.* [Mr Buckingham says, that its appearance is grand, but that the barren aspect of the mountains on each side, and the total absence of wood, gives a cast of dulness to the picture, which is increased in melancholy by the dead calm of its waters, and the silence which reigns throughout its whole extent.' To the same purport are the observations of Dr Robinson, 'No one can look without interest upon that lake on whose shores our Saviour lived so long, and where he performed so many of his mighty works. Yet to me, I confess, the attraction lay more in these associations, than in the scenery itself. The lake presents, indeed, a beautiful sheet of limpid water, in a deep depressed basin, from which the shores rise, in general, steeply and continuously all around, except where a ravine, or

* Josephus' Wars of the Jews, chap. x. p. 205. [The extent of this lake is generally computed at from fifteen to eighteen English miles in length, and from six to eight in breadth. Dr Clarke describes it as longer and finer than our Cumberland and Westmoreland lakes, but inferior to Loch Lomond.]—*Editor.*

sometimes a deep wady, occasionally interrupts them. The hills are round and tame, with little of the picturesque in their form; they are neither decked by shrubs nor forests; and even the verdure of the grass and herbage, which, earlier in the season, might give them a pleasing aspect, was already gone. They were now naked and dreary. Whoever looks here for the magnificence of the Swiss lakes, or the softer beauty of those of England, will be disappointed.*] Its water is limpid, sweet, and wholesome; and lying upon gravel, is softer than the water either of a river or fountain; and at the same time so cold, that, says the Jewish historian, it cannot be warmed by exposure to the sun, in the hottest season of the year. It abounds in a great variety of fish, which, for taste and shape, are peculiar to itself.† The lake of Tiberias is properly a dilatation of the river Jordan; which through the mid-

* 'The rocks,' says Mr Monro, 'reach to the very edge of the water, and the pass over them enters, towards the top, a gallery curiously scooped along the face of the precipice, the sides of which are concave, the parapet-wall next the sea being four feet and a half high, and the passage so narrow, that the baggage-mule could with difficulty get through. This seems to have been the old land communication between Bethsaida and Capernaum. The lake here is richly margined with the wide belt of oleanders, growing in such luxuriance as they are never known to do even in the most genial parts of Europe, and presenting, with their glowing flowers, an unbroken surface of the brightest roseate hue.'—*Editor*.

† The charmouth, silurus, baenni, mugil (chub), and sparus galilæus are described by various writers as the principal kinds of fish found in this lake; and Hasselquist was the first to observe that they were the same as those met with in the Nile. Clarke and Carne mention a species of mullet, which is peculiar to this lake, and to which, tradition says, that Jesus Christ was partial. Josephus states, that 238 boats, called ships in the gospel history, were employed on this lake, each of which was manned by four men. Now, there only one boat plies, and that occasionally, instead of boats. The fishermen wade into the water and catch the fish with hand-nets. It has been frequently remarked, that it is only in the northern part of this lake that fish are found in any great degree of abundance; and hence the beautiful propriety of our Lord's delivering the parable of 'the net cast into the sea' to the people of Capernaum, rather than to the inhabitants of any other part of the shore.—*Editor*.

dle of it pursues his course to the Dead Sea. [The Jordan here maintains its general character for rapidity. Its strong current is distinctly traceable through the middle of the sea, as if it refused to mingle its stream with the waters of a standing lake.* The bed of this limpid expanse is remarkable for its deep depression. Towards the south, however, the tapering extremities of the neighbouring hills shoot across the outlet, and dam it, in consequence of which the south and middle portions of the lake are considerably deeper than in any other part. In winter its level generally is raised, inasmuch as, besides the little streamlets on every side that pour their constant supplies, the mountain torrents contribute to swell the volume of water, and the rise is often so great as to flood the courts of the houses that are close upon the shore. The position of this lake, deep sunk, as it were, in the lap of a circular range of precipitous hills, and protected by this mountain barrier against the fury of the winds on every side, except the narrow openings at the entrance and outlet of the Jordan, serves to preserve a calm and placid serenity on its surface; and, in point of fact, its waters, though fresh and light, are nearly as smooth and motionless as those of the Dead Sea. But the same local features occasionally expose it to the ravages of the tremendous squalls that rise among the mountains; and when the current of the Jordan is met by contrary winds, which blow often with resistless violence from the south-east, and through the narrow gorge, where the Jordan issues, the water rises to a prodigious swell, so that the small craft that ply in that inland sea are unable to ride against the storm; and, in many unfortunate cases, have been overwhelmed in the surge. The gospel history records a voyage, when the disciples were overtaken by one of those fearful hurricanes that sweep over this expanse of water; and finding their nautical experience of no avail in preserving their frail

* Dr Clarke.

bark, they threw themselves on the resources of their Master, who, by the energy of a word, hushed the waves into their wonted calm.*] Gennesareth is not more celebrated for its delicious air and temperature, than for a spring of living waters, clear as crystal, to which the natives give the name of Capernaum ; which some have considered as a little gut of the Nile, because it contains a species of fish no where else to be found, but in the neighbourhood of Alexandria. The length of the country along the lake is about four miles, and the breadth four miles and a half. This district was, in the time of Josephus, inhabited by a skilful and industrious people, who, wisely availing themselves of the singular advantages which the soil and climate of their highly favoured country afforded them, carried the improvement of their lands to the highest degree of perfection. From the extraordinary fruitfulness of this tract, some conjecture that the word Gennesareth is compounded of two words, Gan and Sar ; of which the first denotes in Hebrew a garden, the last a prince ; and consequently the compound, the garden of a prince, or a princely garden. But, although the name in this view sufficiently corresponds with the nature of the country, it is more probable that the word Gennesareth, in the New Testament, owes its existence to the term Chinnereth or Cinnereth in the Old ; for, in the days of Joshua, Cinnereth was a fortified city in the tribe of Naphtali ;† and it is evident from a passage in the first book of Kings, that it gave its name to the surrounding country.‡ The Jewish legislator in several parts of his writings, and Joshua in the history of his proceedings, place the city of Chinnereth on the shore of the lake Tiberias, calling it by the same name, the sea of Chinnereth.§ Hence it is more than probable, that Gennesareth in the New Testament is only a cor-

* Luke viii. 24. † Joshua xix. 35. ‡ 1 Kings xv. 20.
§ Numbers xxxiv. 11 ; Deut. iiii. 17 ; Josh. xii. 3.

ruption of Cinnereth, the name by which the city and the lake on which it stood were known to the ancient Israelites. The city had indeed perished in the wars between the kings of Syria and Israel, long before the coming of Christ, which is the true reason that no mention is made of it in the New Testament, while the district where it stood retained its name for many ages after its fall. The date of its destruction may, with great probability, be fixed in the reign of Baasha, king of Israel, about nine hundred and fifty-eight years before Christ, when Benhadad, king of Syria, invaded his dominions, and ‘smote Ijon, and Dan, and Abel-beth-maachah, and all Cinnereth, with all the land of Naphtali.’* Upon the ruins of ancient Cinnereth, afterwards arose the city of Capernaum, deriving its name from the excellent fountain already mentioned, near which it was built; but the lake and the adjacent lands were permitted to retain their ancient name, till in the lapse of ages, or by a change of dialect, it was moulded into Gennesareth. It was a common saying among the Jews, in reference to the lake of Gennesareth, that *God loved that sea more than all other seas*. And, in one sense, the observation is quite correct; for it was honoured above all others, with the presence of our blessed Lord and Saviour, both before and after his resurrection. He made choice of Capernaum, which stood upon the margin of the lake, as his ordinary place of residence; on account of which it is called *his own city*.† On its shores he found several of his apostles pursuing the humble employment of fishermen, and called them to be the witnesses of his mighty works, and the heralds of his kingdom. It was on this sea where he came to them walking upon the water; where he rebuked the winds and the waves, and the furious storm was in a moment changed into a profound calm; and where he filled their nets with a miraculous draught of fishes. On the shore of this lake, he ap-

* 1 Kings xv. 20.

† Matt. ix. 1.

peared to his disciples after his resurrection ; and, after rebuking Peter for his unfaithfulness, and exacting a three-fold confession, corresponding to his three-fold denial, restored him to his office as an apostle, and to his station as a pillar in the church.*

The only other lake connected with the illustration of Scripture, is the Salt sea or Asphaltites.† This remarkable expanse of water covers the fruitful vale where once flourished the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, with the other cities of the plain ; a vale so rich and beautiful, that the sacred historian compares it to the garden of paradise.‡ The original name of this delicious region was Siddim:—‘ All of these were joined together in the vale of Siddim, which is the Salt sea.’§ Hence it may be inferred with absolute certainty, that when the cities were destroyed, the very ground where they stood, which had been polluted by the enormous wickedness of the inhabitants, suffered a complete and permanent change. This is confirmed by the sacred historian in the following terms :—‘ Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah, brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven. And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.’|| Not satisfied with overthrowing the cities and destroying their inhabitants, the righteous

* Wells’ Historical Geography, vol. ii. p. 175, *et seq.* [The usual serenity of this lake was interrupted, during the last invasion by the Romans ; several naval engagements took place, in one of which, where Vespasian and Titus were both present, so great a multitude of the Jews fell, that, to use the words of Josephus, ‘ nothing was to be seen either on the lake or on the shores but the mangled bodies of the soldiers, in consequence of which the very air became tainted.’]
—*Editor.*

† By Josephus and the classical writers it was called Asphaltites ; since the days of Jerome the Dead Sea. It was known also by the names of the Sea of Sodom, the Sea of the Desert, the Salt Sea, the Sea of the Plain, the East Sea, from its position relatively to the land of Israel. See Deut. iii. 17 ; iv. 49 ; Josh. xv. 5 ; Ezek. xlvii. 18 ; Joel ii. 20.—*Editor.*

‡ Gen. xiii. 10.

§ Gen. xiv. 3.

|| Gen. xix. 24.

Judge also overthrew all the plain, that is, he consumed its productions, he destroyed its beauty, he extinguished the very principles of its fertility, and submerged the ground itself under the waters of the Jordan, that the foot of man might never tread it more. The destruction was complete and irreparable; the country was in a manner blotted out of the map of Palestine, by converting it into a deep lake: so fierce was the indignation, so terrible the overthrow. Thus were the cities of the plain, and the ground on which they stood, set forth for an example to every succeeding age; and to that awful catastrophe the sacred writers often allude, in their denunciations of the divine judgments against apostate Israel:—‘When the generations to come shall see that the whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning; that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth thereon (like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim, which the Lord overthrew in his anger and in his wrath); even all nations shall say, wherefore has the Lord done this unto this land?’* The prophet Hosea, pathetically describing the great mercy of God toward the people of Israel, and his unwillingness to punish them, notwithstanding their signal ingratitude, breaks out into the following animated address, in the name of the Lord:—‘How shall I give thee up, Ephraim; how shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah, how shall I set thee as Zeboim? My heart is turned within me, and my repentings are kindled together.’†

The learned Michaelis ascribes the destruction of those cities to the agency of natural causes. It may be admitted, without offence to religion, that the sovereign Ruler of the universe put in operation such causes on that memorable occasion. Sodom was built upon a mine of bitumen, as we know from the testimony of Moses and Josephus, who speak of wells

* Deut. xxix. 23.

G.

† Hosea xi. 8.

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abounding with bitumen in the valley of Siddim. Lightning pointed by the hand of Omnipotence kindled the combustible mass, and the cities sunk in the subterraneous conflagration. Nor is the ingenious suggestion of M. Malte Brun to be omitted, that Sodom and Gomorrah themselves might have been built of bituminous stones, and then set in flames by the fire of heaven.

The particular situation of these five cities cannot now be discovered; but it is certain they all lay within the vale of Siddim. Of these four were overwhelmed with a storm of fire and brimstone from heaven, on account of their hideous crimes: the fifth was spared at the earnest supplication of Lot, who chose it as the place of his retreat. The original name of this place was Bela; but from the argument urged by Lot for its preservation, 'Is it not a little one;' it received the name of Zoar, or the little city, by which it was ever afterwards distinguished. As Zoar seemed to have been the least of the five cities in the vale of Siddim, so Sodom seems to have been the most considerable, and Gomorrah next to it in wealth and greatness. This may be inferred from the destruction of the five cities being frequently denoted in Scripture, by the overthrow of Sodom alone: and from the arrangement of the sacred writers, who uniformly place Sodom at the head of the list, and next to it the city of Gomorrah.

The great importance of an abundant supply of water in those parts of the world, drew from the sacred historian the remark:—'Now the plain of Jordan was well watered every where, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah (even like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt), as thou comest unto Zoar.*' This clause, *as thou comest unto Zoar*, has much perplexed commentators, while they refer it to the land of Egypt, in the clause immediately preceding; but if what is said by way of comparison, *even like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt*, be

* Gen. xiii. 10.

inclosed in a parenthesis, the difficulty is removed, and the import of the last clause becomes plain and easy :—‘ Before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, the plain of Jordan was well watered every where as thou comest unto Zoar,’ the city in the vale of Siddim, to which Lot, at his earnest and repeated entreaty, was permitted to flee.*

Dr Wells, from whose geography the solution now proposed is abridged, suggests another way of removing the difficulty, by supposing Zoar to be a false reading for Zoan. Such a supposition he thinks the more allowable, ‘ not only because the difference lies in the change but of one letter, but also, because it appears that the Syriac translator actually read it so. If then the original reading was Zoan, the last clause may be excellently well connected to the land of Egypt, in the clause immediately foregoing. For Zoan was a famous, and as is likely in those days, the capital city of Egypt, lying near or on the Nile ; and on the lower part thereof, or not far from the sea coasts, where the said river is divided into several branches, and so the country more watered thereabout than in other parts. In short, it is thought to be, and is rendered by the Seventy interpreters, Tanis ; from which one of the mouths of the Nile was denominated Ostium Tanaiticum, the Tanaitic mouth.’ According to this reading, the import of the verse will be this : The plain of Jordan was well watered every where ; before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, as the garden of Eden, which was moistened by the united streams of the Tigris and Euphrates, or as the land of Egypt, particularly in the parts about Zoan, where the Nile, divided into several branches, irrigates the fields.

The lake Asphaltites is enclosed on the east and west with exceeding high mountains ; [those on the east being higher than the opposite ones, and projecting close and even into the sea, while in several places the

* Wells' Historical Geography, vol. i. pp. 148, 152, 157.

hills on the west leave a small strip of shore ; and, on both sides being so precipitous, that the descent to the water is very difficult and dangerous ;] on the north it is bounded with the plain of Jericho, on which side it receives the waters of the Jordan ; on the south it is open, and extends beyond the reach of the eye. It is said to be twenty-four leagues long, and six or seven broad ;* and is fringed with a kind of coppice of bushes and reeds. In the midst of this border, not a furlong from the sea, rises a fountain of brackish water, which was pointed out to Maundrell by his Arab conductor ; a sure proof that the soil is not equally impregnated with saline particles.† The ground to the distance of half an hour from the sea, is uneven, and broken into hillocks, which Mr Maundrell compares to ruinous lime-kilns ; but whether these might be the pits at which the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah were overthrown by the four kings who invaded their country, he could not determine.

The water of the lake is intensely salt, extremely bitter and nauseous, and so heavy, that the most impetuous winds can scarcely ruffle its surface.‡ It is

* The greatest discrepancies exist in the accounts given of the dimensions of the Dead Sea, probably arising from the calculations having been in most instances taken, not from actual measurement, but from observations made on different points of the adjoining heights. The extraordinary clearness of the atmosphere, however, as well as the curving of the shore, must render all such estimates exceedingly deceptive. According to the cautious statement of Dr Robinson, who took great pains to secure accuracy, the length of this lake is about fifty English miles, and its breadth from ten to twelve.—*Editor*.

† The fountain alluded to in the text is Ain Jidy, the water of which is fresh. But not to speak of the fountains around Jericho at the northern extremity of the lake, several other brackish and even fresh water spots have been discovered since Maundrell's time along the shore. Three brackish fountains are found toward the north.—*Editor*.

‡ Chateaubriand's *Travels*, vol. i. p. 410. [A recent traveller, however, says that a very light breeze will ruffle it, and that its stillness arises from the protection of the mountains, and not the density of the fluid.—*Letters from Palestine*, p. 120.]—*Editor*.

called by common writers the Dead Sea, because it nourishes neither animal nor vegetable life. No verdure is to be seen on its banks, nor fish to be found within its waters; but it is not true that its exhalations are so pestiferous as to kill birds that attempt to fly over it.* Mr Maundrell saw several birds flying about, and skimming the surface of its waters, without any visible harm.† The same fact is attested by Volney, who states it as no uncommon thing to see swallows dipping for water necessary to build their nests. The true cause that deprives it of vegetables and animals, is the extreme saltness of the water, which is vastly stronger than that of the sea. The soil around it, impregnated also with salt, produces no plants; and the air itself, which becomes loaded with saline particles from evaporation, and which receives also the sulphureous and bituminous vapours, cannot be favourable to vegetation; hence the deadly aspect which reigns around this lake. The ground about it, however, is not marshy,‡ and its waters are limpid and incorruptible, as must be the case with a dissolution of salt.§ Mr Maundrell questions the truth of the common tradition, which is admitted by Volney in all its extent, that the waters of the Dead Sea are destruc-

* 'In those parts of the shore,' says Dr Robinson, 'where there are fountains or streams of water, there is a fertile and abundant vegetation; nor have I ever seen a more luxuriant growth than at Ain Jidy; here, too, were birds in great numbers in the thicket, and we saw them frequently flying over the sea. We were no less surprised than delighted to hear, in the midst of the solitude and grandeur of these desolations, the morning song of innumerable birds. The trees, and rocks, and air around were full of the carols of the lark, the cheerful whistle of the quail, the call of the partridge, and the warbling of many other feathered choristers; while birds of prey were soaring and screaming in front of the cliffs above.'—*Biblic. Resear.* vol. ii. pp. 219, 239.—*Editor.*

† Maundrell's Journey, pp. 82, 83, 84: see in confirmation of these statements, Dr Clarke's Travels in Palestine, vol. ii. p. 584.

‡ This, indeed, is the general character of the shore; but in those rare places where fresh water is found, the ground is marshy, and abounds with frogs.—*Editor.*

§ Volney's Travels, vol. i. p. 217.

tive to animal existence, having observed among the pebbles on the shore two or three shells of fish, resembling oyster-shells.* That respectable traveller, willing to make an experiment of its strength, went into it, and found it bore up his body in swimming, with an uncommon force; but the relation of some authors, that men wading into it are buoyed up to the top as soon as the water reaches to the middle, he found upon experiment untrue.†

A recent traveller, on visiting the lake, found a crust of salt covering the surface of the ground, and resembling a snowy plain, from which a few stunted shrubs reared their heads. No murmur, no cooling breeze announced the approach to its margin. The strand bestrewed with stones was hot, the waters of the lake were motionless, and absolutely dead along the shore: he found it impossible to keep the water in his mouth; it far exceeded that of the sea in saltness, and produced upon the lips the effect of a strong solution of alum. Before his boots were completely dry, they were covered with salt; his clothes, his hat, his hands, in less than three hours, were impregnated with this mineral. About midnight he heard a noise upon the lake, and

* More accurate observations have ascertained these to be the shells of land animals.—*Editor*.

† According to Josephus, the emperor Vespasian caused several slaves, bound hand and foot, to be cast into a deep part of the lake, who, instead of sinking, continued to float on the surface. If the waters of the Dead Sea, however, retain the ordinary property of fluids, bodies will sink in them as well as in others, according as they are lighter or heavier than the specific gravity of the lake, and all stories like this of Josephus may be confidently pronounced to be fabulous. The buoyancy of the water, however, is remarkable. 'When swimming,' says Mr Monro, 'it was scarcely possible to keep the feet below the water; when standing upright (treading water as it is called), the shoulders were raised above the surface, and it was not easy to keep this position as the body seemed to become top heavy. One of our party, who could not swim, lay like a cork upon the surface.' 'I,' says Dr Robinson, who could never swim before, could sit, stand, lie, or swim, without difficulty.' All who have bathed in this water describe it as oily, greasy, and leaving a thick incrustation upon the skin.—*Editor*.

was informed by the Arabs, that it proceeded from legions of small fish, which come and leap about on the shore.

Lavoisier analyzed its water, and found that 100 lbs. contain 45 lbs. 6 oz. of salt.* The water is perfectly transparent, and so heavy that persons who never learned to swim will float on its surface. It is now known, that bodies sink or float upon it according to the proportion of their gravity to the gravity of its water. A strong breeze, without cooling the air, produced only a slight undulation on the bosom of the lake; the waves charged with salt soon subsided by their own weight, and scarcely broke against the shore.† [More minute and accurate analyses of these singular waters, in which the whole world is interested, have since been made by eminent chemists, both at home and on the continent:—the four principal of which are quoted by Robinson as follows:—

Specific Gravity,		Dr Maroet. Guy Lussac.		
		1211	1228	
Muriate of Lime,	{	Chloride of Calcium,	3.920	3.98
--- Magnesia,		--- Magnesium,	10.246	75.31
--- Soda,		--- Sodium,	10.360	6.95
Sulphate of Lime,			0.054	---
			24.580	26.24
			75.420	73.76
			100	100

* Irby and Mangles, who visited this lake in the year 1817 or 1818, assert that its water is 'as bitter and as buoyant as people have reported.' Those of their party who could not swim, floated on its surface like corks. On dipping the head in, the eyes smarted dreadfully; and they were much surprised to observe, on coming out of the lake, that the water did not evaporate from the body as is the case on emerging from fresh water, but adhered to the skin, and was greasy to the touch.—P. 330, quoted from *Eclectic Review* for January 1, 1824.

† Chateaubriand's *Travels*, vol. i. pp. 407, 408.

Specific Gravity, . . .	Prof. Gmelin.	Dr. Apjohn.
	1212	1553
Chloride of Calcium, . . .	3.2141	2.438
--- Magnesium, . . .	11.7734	7.370
Bromide of Magnesium, . . .	0.4393	0.201
Chloride of Pottasium, . . .	1.6738	0.852
--- Sodium, . . .	7.0777	7.839
--- Manganese, . . .	0.2117	0.005
--- Aluminium, . . .	0.0896	---
--- Ammonium, . . .	0.0075	---
Sulphate of Lime, . . .	0.0527	0.075
	24.5398	18.780
Water, . . .	75.4602	81.220
	100	100

[The cause of the difference in the above results seems to be, that the portions of water subjected to the analysis were taken from different parts of the lake, and at different seasons. Those at the mouth of the Jordan are not so salt as the middle or southern quarters, nor is the lake itself so extremely acrid after its volume has been increased by the lateral streams that feed it after the rains. All the analyses, however, unite in bearing testimony to the extraordinary proportion of salt that enters into the composition of these waters. So great is this proportion, that, in the words of an eminent, scientific writer, it appears the Dead Sea water *now* contains about *one-fourth* of its weight of salt supposed in a state of perfect desiccation; or, if they be desiccated at the temperature of 180°, or Fahrenheit's scale, they will amount to *forty-one per cent.* of the water. If any person wish for a stronger confirmation of the scripture account of the origin of the Dead Sea than this furnishes, we can only pity the miserable state of incredulity to which he is reduced, and commit him to the influences of that power which can cause 'the wilderness to blossom as the rose, and from stones raise up children unto Abraham.'*]

* Eclectic Review, 1809, vol. v. part i. p. 134.

Desirous to see the remains, if any existed, of those cities anciently situated in this place, and made so dreadful an example of divine vengeance, Maundrell diligently surveyed the waters as far as his eye could reach ; but he could neither discern any heaps of ruin, nor any smoke ascending above the surface of the waters, as is usually described in the writings and maps of geographers. But he states, what was confidently attested to him by the father guardian, and the procurator of Jerusalem, both men in years, and seemingly not destitute either of sense or probity, that they had once actually seen one of these ruins ; that it was so near the shore, and the water so shallow at that time, that they, together with some Frenchmen, went into it, and found there several pillars, and other fragments of buildings. The cause of his being deprived of this sight was, he supposes, the height of the water.

On the shore he found a black sort of pebble, which, being held in the flame of a candle, soon burns, and yields a smoke of an intolerable stench. It has the property of losing only a part of its weight, but not of its bulk, in burning. The hills bordering upon the lake are said to abound with this kind of sulphureous stones. Maundrell saw pieces of it at the convent of St John, in the wilderness, two feet square. They were carved in bas-relief, and polished to as great a lustre as black marble is capable of, and were designed for the ornament of the new church at the convent, and are manufactured in Jerusalem into rosaries. He found none of the bitumen for which this lake has been so famous, at the place which he visited ; but was informed, that it was gathered near the mountains on both sides, in great plenty. Several lumps of it were brought to him at Jerusalem ; it exactly resembles pitch, and cannot readily be distinguished from it, but by the sulphureousness of its smell and taste. [Pieces of sulphur are frequently found on the shore about the size of walnuts ; large masses of asphaltum are often

thrown up by the sea still, as seems to have been the case in the time of Josephus, who describes them to have been so immense as to resemble the form and size of headless oxen. Robinson mentions that after the earthquake of January 1, 1837, a large mass of bitumen (one described as an island, another like a house), was discovered floating on the sea, and was driven a-ground on the west side, not far to the north of Usdum. Seventy men were employed to cut it down with axes; it was carried away in camel loads, and sold for upwards of two thousand dollars.* During the violent heats of summer, large deposits of salt are made along the shore, some parts of which, being more favourable for it lying, are frequented by the Arabs, who there procure supplies sufficient for the use of their families. When Irby and Mangles were passing along the coast they found several of the natives peeling off a solid surface of salt several inches in thickness, and loading it on asses.†] On the west side of the sea is a small promontory, near which his guide told him stood the monument of Lot's metamorphosed wife; part of which, if they may be credited, is visible at this day. Mr Maundrell neither saw nor heard of the apples of Sodom, so frequently mentioned by the ancients; nor did he discover any tree near the lake, from which a fruit of that kind might be expected. It is a production which exists only in the imagination and song of the poet; and has perhaps been kept up so long, because it furnished him with a good allusion, or helped him to a beautiful simile.

Several travellers, however, claim the honour of having discovered that far-famed apple. Hasselquist says, the apple of Sodom is not the fruit either of a tree or of a shrub, but the production of the *solanum melongena* (night-shade) of Linnæus.‡ It is found in great abundance round Jericho, in the vales near the Jordan, and

* Robinson, vol. ii. p. 230.

† Irby and Mangles' Trav. p. 457.

‡ Hasselquist, p. 235.

in the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea. Its apples are sometimes full of dust; but this appears only when the fruit is attacked by an insect, which converts the whole of the inside into dust, leaving nothing but the rind entire, without causing it to lose any of its colour.

M. Seetzen supposes it is the fruit of a tree which grows on the plain of El Gor, near the southern extremity of the Dead Sea. The tree resembles a fig-tree, and the fruit is like the pomegranate: it struck him, that this fruit, which has no pulp or flesh in the inside, but only a species of cotton resembling silk, and is unknown in the rest of Palestine, might be the celebrated apple of Sodom.

Chateaubriand imagines that he has made the interesting discovery. The shrub which bears, in his opinion, the true apple of Sodom, grows two or three leagues from the mouth of the Jordan; it is thorny, and has small taper leaves; its fruit is exactly like the little Egyptian lemon, both in size and colour: before it is ripe, it is filled with a corrosive and saline juice; when dried, it yields a blackish seed, which may be compared to ashes, and which resembles bitter pepper in taste.* It is evident from these discrepancies that this celebrated fruit remains still to be discovered and described.

The extreme saltiness of this lake has been ascribed by Volney to mines of fossil salt in the side of the mountains, which extend along the western shore, and from time immemorial have supplied the Arabs in the neighbourhood, and even the city of Jerusalem, with salt.† He does not attempt to invalidate the credit of the Mosaic narrative; but only insinuates, that these saline depositions were either coeval with the mountains in which they are found, or entered into their original conformation. The extraordinary fruitfulness of the vale of Siddim, before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, is asserted by Moses in terms so clear and precise, that

* Travels, vol. i. pp. 418, 419.

† Travels, vol. i. p. 217.

the veracity of the sacred writer must be overthrown, before a reasonable doubt can be entertained of the fact. No disproportionate quantity of saline matter could then have been present either in the soil or in the surrounding mountains. That it abounded with bitumen, some have inferred from the assertion of Moses, that the vale of Siddim was full of slime pits: where the Hebrew word, *chemar*, which we render slime, others, and particularly the Seventy interpreters, render bitumen. But *gophrith*, and not *chemar*, is the word that Moses employs to denote brimstone in his account of the judgment which overwhelmed the cities of the plain; and by consequence, brimstone is not meant, when *chemar* is used, but bitumen, a very different substance. Hence the brimstone which now impregnates the soil of the salt sea, and banishes almost every kind of vegetation from its shores, must be regarded, not as an original, but an accidental ingredient, remaining from the destruction of the vale by fire and brimstone from Heaven. The same remark applies to the mines of fossil salt, on the surrounding mountains; the saline matter was deposited in the cavities which it now occupies at the same time, else the vale of Siddim, instead of verdant pastures, and abundant harvests, had exhibited the same frightful sterility from the beginning, for which it is so remarkable in modern times. Bitumen, if the Hebrew word *chemar* denotes that substance, abounds in the richest soils; for in the vale of Shinar, whose soil, by the agreement of all writers, is fertile in the highest degree, the builders of the tower of Babel used it for mortar. The ark of bulrushes in which Moses was embarked on the Nile, was in like manner daubed with bitumen (*chemar*) and pitch; but the mother of Moses, considering the poverty of her house, cannot be supposed to have procured it from a distance, nor at any great expense; she must therefore have found it in the soil of Egypt, near the Nile, on whose borders she lived. It is therefore reasonable

to suppose, that bitumen abounded in Goshen, a region famed for the richness of its pastures. Hence it may be fairly concluded, that the vale of Siddim before its destruction, in respect of natural fertility, resembled the plain of Shinar, and the land of Egypt along the Nile. But it is well known, that wherever brimstone and saline matter abound, there sterility and desolation reign. Is it not then reasonable to infer, that the sulphureous and saline matters, discovered in the waters and on the shores of the Asphaltites, are the relics of the divine vengeance executed on the cities of the plain, and not original ingredients in the soil?

If we listen to the testimony of the sacred writers, what was reasonable hypothesis rises into absolute certainty. Moses expressly ascribes the brimstone, the salt, and the burning, in the overthrow of Sodom, to the immediate vengeance of heaven :—‘ When they see the plagues of that land, . . . that the whole land is brimstone, and salt, and burning ; that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth thereon (like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim, which the Lord overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath) ; even all nations will say, Wherefore has the Lord done thus unto this land ? What meaneth the heat of this great anger.’* In this passage, the brimstone, salt, and burning, are mentioned as true and proper effects of the divine wrath ; and since this fearful destruction is compared to the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, the brimstone and salt into which the vale of Siddim was turned, must also be the true and proper effects of divine anger. This indeed, Moses asserts in the plainest terms :—‘ Then the Lord rained upon Sodom, and upon Gomorrah, brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven ; and he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.’† But since the brimstone and the fire were rained from hea-

* Deut. xxix. 22-24.

† Gen. xix. 24.

ven, so must the salt, with which they are connected in the former quotation : and this is the opinion received by the Jewish doctors. The frightful sterility which followed the brimstone, salt, and burning, in the first quotation, is, in the same manner, represented as an effect of the divine judgment upon the vale of Siddim :—‘ It is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth thereon.’

The barrenness and desolation that result from the action of brimstone and salt, are introduced by the prophet in these words :—‘ Thus saith the Lord, Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh, but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land, and not inhabited.’* In this passage, the salt is assigned as the cause that the parched places in the wilderness remain in a state of perpetual sterility. In the judgments which the prophet Zephaniah was directed to predict against the kingdom of Moab, he alludes expressly to the punishment of Sodom and Gomorrah, and intimates, that one part of that punishment consisted in the vale being turned into salt : ‘ As I live, saith the Lord, . . . Surely Moab shall be as Sodom, and the children of Ammon as Gomorrah, even the breeding of nettles and salt pits, and a perpetual desolation.’† The qualities of the lake which now covers the once fertile and delightful vale of Siddim, and the desolate appearance of the surrounding country, as has been already shown, perfectly correspond with the words of the inspired writers, and the conclusions of reason.

Some writers suppose the Dead Sea to be the crater of a volcano. But this opinion is entirely without foundation ; for all extinguished volcanoes exhibit the same characters, that is to say, mountains excavated

* Jer. xvii. 5, 6.

† Zeph. ii. 9.

in the form of a tunnel, lava and ashes, which exhibit incontestible proofs of the agency of fire. The Dead Sea, on the contrary, is a lake of great length, curved like a bow, placed between two ranges of mountains, which have no natural coherence in form, no homogeneousness of soil. They do not meet at the two extremities of the lake ; but continue, the one to bound the valley of Jordan, and to run northward as far as the lake of Tiberias ; the other to stretch away to the south, till they are lost in the sands of Yemen. Bitumen, warm springs, and phosphoric stones are found, it is true, in the mountains of Arabia : Chateaubriand, however, met with none of these in the opposite chain ; nor is the presence of hot springs, sulphur, and asphaltos, sufficient to attest the anterior existence of a volcano.

[The hypothesis that the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah was occasioned by the eruption of a neighbouring volcano, seems to rest, as its original foundation, on a passage of the geographer Strabo, to the effect, that, according to a tradition of the inhabitants of the country, the plain of Siddim, with thirteen cities, was overwhelmed by a torrent of liquid fire, which that writer adds (probably as his own opinion) issued from a burning mountain. It is enough to excite a suspicion, at first sight, against any theory on this subject, that it was broached by a heathen, and zealously espoused by a modern infidel ; and yet, as it has been partially adopted by several writers in recent times, whose scientific attainments, and undoubted faith in revelation, entitle them to respectful attention, it is necessary to bestow a sentence or two on this hypothesis, the more especially as our author's remarks in the preceding paragraphs are not very correct. In support of the opinion, it is said, that the whole valley of the Jordan lies on a bed that has evidently been subjected to volcanic action ; that the mountains which encompass it on both sides, instead of having 'any natural coherence of form, or homogeneousness of soil,' are

throughout limestone rocks ; that the fossil salt and bitumen, so plentifully found around the Dead Sea, are the product of volcanic action ; that although Chateaubriand found no bitumen or phosphoric stones and hot springs on the western side of the Jordan, others have, who describe the crater of an extinct volcano, not far from Capernaum, as well as other traces of the agency of fire ; that the smoke which is frequently seen issuing from the sea, shows that the subterraneous fire is still at work ; that as the matter of the volcano, which is so destructive, is often projected to a great height, it might be said to be 'rained from heaven ;' that on this supposition, the fate of Lot's wife, who was enveloped in a stream of lava, is naturally accounted for, as well as the conduct of that patriarch himself, who, after staying a night in Zoar, retired to a more elevated position in the adjoining mountains, to be beyond the reach of the fiery torrent which threatened still to advance. In answer to these arguments, it is maintained, that such an hypothesis plainly unsettles the foundations of our faith, inasmuch as it implies that either Moses did not know the nature of the facts he was narrating, or deceived the people, by ascribing to the direct agency of God, what he knew to have been a natural phenomenon ; that there is no smoke issuing from the lake, different from the vapour that would ascend from all lakes in the same circumstances ; that on the supposition of the catastrophe having been occasioned by the eruption of a volcano, the only miraculous thing about the occurrence is, the fore-knowledge of it, which must rest on the testimony of Abraham and Lot ; and as this was not believed, it is impossible to see how the doom of these guilty cities could either alarm the fears of that profane age, or be 'an ensample to those who should after live ungodly ;' that it is incredible how Lot could tell the people of Zoar, that it was an infliction from heaven, from which they had been saved by his intercession, if the inhabitants of that

town saw in it nothing but a natural phenomenon, produced by physical causes ; and, finally, that it is expressly said by Christ himself, in a passage, the simple and conversational style of which manifestly excludes the idea of poetical exaggeration or embellishment, ‘the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it *rained fire and brimstone from heaven*, and consumed them all.’

[There is much more probability in the other hypothesis, which has been hinted at in a former page, viz. that as bitumen abounded so plentifully in the plain of Siddim, and the houses in the doomed cities were probably built with that substance, those eminently inflammable materials were struck with lightning, directed by the hand of a justly offended God ; and although a physical agent is thus introduced as the proximate cause of the catastrophe, there is nothing involved in such a supposition at variance with the spirit and style of the Scriptures, which frequently represent God as employing famine, pestilence, and earthquakes, as his instruments in punishing the guilty nations, and which particularly tell us, that ‘flaming fire is his messenger.’ Dr Robinson, who strongly inclines to this theory, though he speaks with the cautious language of a man who is more anxious to discover the truth of the sacred narrative, than to construct a new view of his own, arrived, after very careful and minute observations on the great depression and figure of the lake, and especially the appearance of the bay, and the flat shores and shallow water of the southern part of the sea, at the conclusion, that there had always been a lake in that region, in which the Jordan discharged itself, although anciently it was much less ; that ‘by some awful convulsion, either the surface of the rich plain of Siddim was scooped out, or the sea was heaved up, so as to cause the waters to overflow, and cover permanently a larger tract than formerly ;’ and that while the streams that on both sides pour into the lake

still remain to attest the veracity of Moses, who describes the country as 'well-watered every where, even as the garden of the Lord,' the slime-pits have been overspread by the water, as appears from the masses of hardened asphaltum which, on any commotion of the earth, are still occasionally thrown up.*

[Among the phenomena of this celebrated lake, not the least remarkable circumstance is, that although constantly receiving the contributions of the Jordan, which enters it on the north, pouring, according to Dr Shaw, a daily discharge of more than six million tons of water; besides those of various other streams, which on the eastern side are more numerous than in any other part of this region; it has never been known to overflow, and yet it is impossible to discover any outlet through which its superfluous waters were discharged. In the absence of all visible and external

* Whatever conjectures may be formed as to the physical agents that were employed in effecting the overthrow of Sodom, Gomorrah, and the other cities of the plain, the miraculous character of the transaction, and its being the direct infliction of Divine vengeance to punish the enormous wickedness of the inhabitants, is established beyond all controversy, both by the simple and minutely circumstantial narrative of Moses, and by other passages of Scripture in which this memorable catastrophe is alluded to. Great progress has undoubtedly been made of late years in the accuracy and extent of our knowledge of the interesting region in which they stood, and which still bears, in the deep gloom and awful solitude that reigns there, unequivocal traces of the Almighty's curse. The reader, who is desirous of more detailed information than our limits will admit of, is referred to Robinson's *Biblical Researches*, Henderson's *Iceland*, and Monro's *Summer Ramble in Syria*. But it may be confidently asserted, that all speculations as to the secondary causes and manner of the catastrophe must be vague hypothesis and uncertain conjecture, until the whole region shall have been carefully surveyed, the geology of the surrounding mountains examined by competent and unprejudiced observers, and all parts of the Dead Sea itself explored with sounding instruments, capable of penetrating its leaden waters. The only traveller who has hitherto undertaken this adventurous voyage, and whose affecting story is so touchingly told by Stephens in his *Incidents of Travel*, suffered so much from want of water, that he died almost as soon as he regained the shore, and buried his observations with him in the grave.—*Editor*.

channels, it was long suspected that there must be some subterranean passage by which it communicated either with the Mediterranean or the Red Sea. But the deep depression of this sea, the level of which is ascertained to be at least 500 feet below that of the Mediterranean, as well as the *inclination* of the great southern plain of El Araba, which divides it from the Red Sea, in consequence of which the streams of that valley all flow northwards, show that such a supposition is not supported by the natural features of the country; and it is now fully established on scientific principles, that from its low position, and the broad expanse it exposes to the influence of a burning sun, evaporation carries off a quantity of water fully equal to the supply received from the rivers.* ‘Provided the Dead Sea,’ says Dr Shaw, ‘should be seventy-two miles long and eighteen broad, then, by allowing, according to Dr Halley’s observation, 6914 tons of vapour for every square mile, there will be drawn up every day above 8,960,000 tons.’]

The rugged mountains and spacious caverns on the south-west shore of the lake Asphaltites, the chosen refuge of the oppressed in every age, acquired additional celebrity from the secure retreat which they afforded to David and his men from the lawless violence of Saul. To this dreary scene, the inspired historian alludes in his memoir of the wanderings and perils of that illustrious exile:—‘It was told Saul, saying, behold, David is in the wilderness of Engedi. Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the mountains of the wild goats.’† In one of the capacious ex-

* ‘As soon as we came,’ says Captains Irby and Mangles, ‘to the pass, which commands an extensive prospect of the Dead Sea; we could observe the effect of the evaporation arising from it, in broad transparent columns of vapour, not unlike water-spouts in appearance, but much larger.’—P. 447.—*Editor*.

† 1 Sam. xxiv. 1, 2. [Mountains of the wild goats, i.e. Engedi.]—*Editor*.

cavations, for which that pile of desolate rocks and precipices is distinguished, David had an opportunity, when Saul went in to cover his feet, by cutting off the skirt of his robe, of proving, at once, the purity of his intentions, and the magnanimity of his heart. Such an act of genuine heroism, ought to have extinguished for ever the groundless resentment and cruel jealousy of his prince ; but Saul was the slave of ambition, and therefore dead to every sentiment of justice and humanity.

Rivers.—The rivers that water the land of Promise are not so remarkable as the mountains and the lakes which diversify its surface. The greater part of them, as the Kidron, which winds along the valley of Jehoshaphat, are only brooks or mountain torrents, some of which are dry for the greater part of the year, or only run with a flowing stream during the melting of the snows on the peaks of Lebanon, or the fall of the former and latter rain. The Kishon, whose furious current swept away the routed legions of Sisera, though mentioned in Scripture as a river, is only a small stream, except when swelled by the rain or melting snow. ‘That ancient river,’ the Kishon, now El-Mukütta, which rises on the southern side of Mount Tabor, pursues his course down the middle of the plain of Esdraelon, and then passing close by the side of mount Carmel falls into the sea at a place named Caypha. When Maundrell crossed this stream, on his way to Jerusalem, its waters were low and inconsiderable ; but in passing along the side of the plain, he observed the tracts of many tributary rivulets falling down into it from the mountains, by which it must be greatly swelled in the rainy season. It was undoubtedly at the season when the Kishon, replenished by the streams of Lebanon, becomes a deep and impetuous torrent, that the bands of Sisera perished in its waters. The Kishon, like several other streams in Palestine, does not run with a full current into the sea, except in the time of the rains, but

percolates through the sands which interpose between it and the Mediterranean.*

[It was somewhere in the narrow valley, where it winds along the base of Carmel, that Elijah slew the prophets of Baal. 'This river,' says Carne, 'is a blessing throughout its whole tract to man and beast, to the store and to the field, were there industry in the people to profit by its waters, which are rarely shrunk or dried up by the heats, at least in the latter part of its course; even when the brook is dried, and the mountain stream reduced to a few shallow pools in its stony bed, this ancient river still flows on, a joy to the eye that roves on the wide landscape of the plain of Esdraelon, and an inexpressible comfort to the way-faring man.']

It has been immortalized in the song of Deborah and Barak:—'The kings came and fought; then fought the kings of Canaan in Taanach by the waters of Megiddo; they took no gain of money. They fought from heaven; the stars in their courses fought against Sisera.'† The confederate kings took no gain for money; they were volunteers in the war, stimulated only by hatred and revenge. But they strove in vain; the hosts of heaven fought for Israel; the stars in their courses, against the powerful bands of Jabin. By the malignant influences of the heavenly bodies, by the storms of hail, thunder, and rain, produced, it is probable, by the power, and directed by the sagacity of holy angels, the confident hopes of Sisera were blasted, and a mark of eternal infamy stamped upon his name. From heaven, says the Chaldee Paraphrast, from heaven, the place where the stars go forth, war was commenced against Sisera; the God of heaven shot forth his arrows, and discomfited the hostile armies; and the river Kishon, swelled over all its banks by the furious tempests, engaged also in the warfare, by the com-

* Maundrell's Journey, p. 86.

† Judges v. 19, 20.

mand of its sovereign Lord, and swept the fugitives away. For this stroke of vengeance, the Kishon was ordained of old : and this is the reason why the inspired bard applies to it the distinguishing epithet in the text : ' The river of Kishon swept them away ; that *ancient* river, the river Kishon.' O my soul, thou hast trodden down strength.*

[Sihor or Shihor-libnath,† the ancient Belus, now the Kardanah, takes its rise among the mountains of Galilee, and after flowing in a south-westerly direction through the plain of Acre, enters the Mediterranean at Akka. It is in size and volume of water a very inconsiderable stream, but in history and mythology is remarkable for two things. The first is, that on its banks the art of making glass was discovered by a ship's crew, who having gone ashore according to the custom of oriental sailors to cook their victuals, and propped their boiling vessel with sand and a few pieces of nitre that were lying around, were surprised to find that the action of the fire had produced a substance that attracted their attention both by its novelty and transparency. It was at first supposed that the production of glass was owing to some peculiar properties of the sand of this stream, in consequence of which it was quarried to supply not only Sidon, but all other places where manufactories were established, with materials for the composition of a substance which was soon found to be of the greatest use and importance in the economy of life. The second thing for which this river is celebrated is the occasionally sanguine colour of its waters, which the heathen mythologists ascribed to the grief of the river god for the death of Adonis, the favourite of Venus, who was killed by a wild boar among the mountains at its source. The blood-red hue of the waters is well known to be occasioned by a minium or red earth, which,

* Wells' Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 354.

† Joshua xix. 26.

after rain, the swollen river washes down from the neighbouring heights. But the vicinity of the scene where the favourite of Venus met his unfortunate end, coupled with the periodical discolouration of the stream, afforded ample scope for the inventive fancy of the poets, to form one of the most pleasant and popular tales of the ancient mythology.

[Kana, or the brook of reeds, the modern Nahr el Kasah, falls into the Mediterranean twelve miles below Cæsarea of Palestine.* It skirted the south border of the western half tribe of Manasseh, which it divided from that of Ephraim.†

[Sorek, a brook, of which the source lies among the mountains of Judah, a little to the south of Jerusalem, being joined by a smaller brook, the Eschol. It takes a westerly course towards the Mediterranean, which it enters south of Ascalon, and formed the ancient boundary between the possessions of Simeon and Dan. Its name was probably derived from the valley it watered.‡

[Besor, a small brook, now Rhinocorura, which falls into the sea southward of Suza. Here it was that David overtook and routed the Amalekites who had made an attack on Ziklag during his absence, and made prisoners of the women.§

[Sihor, another small brook to the south of Besor, forming anciently the south-west boundary of the Holy Land. It is called by various names in Scripture, 'the river of Egypt,' || 'the river of the wilderness,' ¶ and here, in all probability, it was that the Ethiopian eunuch was baptized.**]

But the largest and most celebrated stream in Palestine, is the Jordan. It is much larger, according to Dr Shaw, than all the brooks and streams of the Holy

* Irby and Mangles' Travels.

† Judges xvi. 4.

‡ Num. xxxiv. 5.

** Acts viii. 26.

† Joshua xv. 8; xvii. 9.

§ 1 Sam. xxx. 1-9.

¶ Amos vi. 14.

Land united together ; and, excepting the Nile, is by far the most considerable river, either of the coast of Syria or of Barbary. He computed it to be about thirty yards broad, and found it nine feet deep at the brink.* This river, which divides the country into two unequal parts, has been commonly said to issue from two fountains, or to be formed by the junction of two rivulets, the Jor and the Dan ; but the assertion seems to be totally destitute of any solid foundation. The Jewish historian, Josephus, on the contrary, places its source at Phiala, a fountain which rises about fifteen miles from Cæsarea Philippi, a little on the right hand, and not much out of the way to Trachonitis. It is called Phiala, or the Vial, from its round figure ; its water is always of the same depth, the basin being brimful, without either shrinking or overflowing. From Phiala to Panion, which was long considered as the real source of Jordan, the river flows under ground. The secret of its subterraneous course was first discovered by Philip, the tetrarch of Trachonitis, who cast straws into the fountain of Phiala, which came out again at Panion.† Leaving the cave of

* Travels, vol. ii. p. 156.

† Panion is a capacious cave near the town of Paneas, the modern Baniyas, where the unanimous voice of antiquity placed one source of the Jordan. Another source, likewise mentioned by Josephus, was about a mile and a half or two miles west of this, at a mount near the town of Dan, now Tell-el-Kady, whence it got the name of Jordan or Yarden, *i. e.* the river of Dan. These two unite together before they flow into the lake Merom. Recent researches have discovered other two streams farther west, which, uniting, enter the north-west extremity of the same lake without touching those on the west. The longer of these western branches, and the fullest of the whole, called by the Arabs Nahr Hashbeiya, issues from the foot of Lebanon or Jebel Sheikh. 'It is somewhat surprising,' says Bell, 'that travellers have never yet followed up the course of the Hashbeiya branch to its remotest source. Until this be accurately surveyed, we can never tell which is the true source of the Jordan. The junction of all these, however, constitutes the Jordan ; the branch of Paneas being the Little Jordan of Josephus.' Captains Irby and Mangles seem the only travellers who have seen and described the cup-like fountain of Phiala.—*Editor.*

Panion, it crosses the bogs and fens of the lake Semichonitis;* and after a course of fifteen miles, passes under the city of Julias, the ancient Bethsaida; then expands into a beautiful sheet of water, named the lake of Gennesareth; and after flowing a long way through the desert, empties itself into the lake Asphaltites, or Dead Sea. As the cave Panion lies at the foot of mount Lebanon, in the northern extremity of Canaan, and the lake Asphaltites extends to the southern extremity, the river Jordan pursues its course through the whole extent of the country from north to south. It is evident, also, from the history of Josephus, that a wilderness or desert of considerable extent stretched along the river Jordan in the times of the New Testament; which was undoubtedly the wilderness mentioned by the evangelists, where John the Baptist came preaching and baptizing.† [The general breadth of the Ghôr, or great valley through which the Jordan flows, is from eight to twelve miles. After leaving the lake Gennesareth, which it does at its south-east extremity, it veers towards the mountains on the west, with as many windings as the Forth below Stirling. The valley gradually loses all traces of vegetation; the surface is a dead level, covered with a smooth nitrous crust, through which the feet of the travellers sink as in ashes. It is in short a desert, and in summer, owing to the marshes, is very insalubrious.]

The Jordan has a considerable depth of water. Chateaubriand makes it six or seven feet deep close at the shore, and about fifty paces in breadth, a considerable distance from its entrance into the Dead Sea.

* Lake Semichonitis or Merom, both of which signify the higher or upper lake; it is now Huleh by the Arabs.—*Editor*.

† Josephus' Wars, &c. chap. iv. p. 8, and chap. x. p. 205. Dr Richardson asserts, that although Panion may be considered as the principal source of the Jordan, numerous streams and springs pour their waters into the bahr-el-Huleh, each contributing its portion to the formation of this sacred stream; Travels, vol. ii. p. 451-453.

According to the computation of Volney, it is hardly sixty paces wide at the mouth. [The breadth of the channel varies very much at different points. Irby and Mangles found by measurement that at the ford of Beisân it is 140 feet broad.] But the author of *Letters from Palestine* states that the stream, when it enters the lake Asphaltites, is deep and rapid, rolling a considerable volume of waters; the width appears from two to three hundred feet, and the current is so violent, that a Greek servant belonging to the author, who attempted to cross it, though strong, active, and an excellent swimmer, found the undertaking impracticable.* It may be said to have two banks, of which the inner marks the ordinary height of the stream; and the outer, its ancient elevation during the rainy season, or the melting of the snows on the summits of Lebanon. [After descending the first, there appears a spacious and level plain, extending to the breadth of a furlong, and which is a dry expanse of sand and gravel, on which one may walk without having the least suspicion, except from the distant ripple of the waves, that any current is near; for the inner bank, which forms the boundary of the river in its natural state is so overspread with a thicket of canes, tamarisks, oleanders, and other wild shrubs, as keeps the river entirely out of view. This level strand has been the scene of many a military muster, and the place of many a popular tumult in the long course of Judea's eventful story; and it was on the same spacious borders that John met and addressed the innumerable multitude that flocked to him from the whole neighbouring country. 'Conceive that earnest reformer, in appealing to the various classes of his countrymen on the vices or crimes to which they were respectively prone, and receiving with open arms the converted and humble penitents who were desirous of sealing their confession

* *Letters from Palestine*, p. 114.

by the rite of baptism, to descry multitudes of the Scribes and Pharisees swelling the ranks of his followers, and concealing, under a well-feigned desire of inquiring after truth, the pride, hypocrisy, and licentiousness characteristic of their sect. Conceive him standing before a vast assemblage on the forsaken and dried up channel of his native river, and you will feel the force of the bold imagery he employed, when, pointing in his honest indignation to the innumerable pebbles that strewed the first beach, he exclaimed, 'I say unto you, *that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham*;' and afterwards looking to the second bank, which was literally a forest of natural wood within the sight, and perhaps the reach of his hearers, he subjoined a prophetic warning of the judgments that impended over that degenerate age, '*and now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees*;' therefore every tree that bringeth not forth good *fruit* is hewn down and cast into the fire.'*] In the days of Joshua, and, it is probable, for many ages after his time, the harvest was one of the seasons when the Jordan overflowed his banks. This fact is distinctly recorded by the sacred historian:—'And as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water (for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest).'[†] This happens in the first month of the Jewish year, which corresponds with March. But in modern times (whether the rapidity of the current has worn the channel deeper than formerly, or whether its waters have taken some other direction), the river seems to have forgotten his ancient greatness. When Maundrell visited Jordan on the 30th of March, the proper time for these inundations, he could discern no sign or probability of such overflowing;‡ nay, so far was it

* Jamieson's Eastern Manners—Gospels.

† Joshua iii. 15; 1 Chron. xii. 15.

‡ Maundrell's Journey, pp. 80, 81, &c.

from overflowing, that it ran, says our author, at least two yards below the brink of its channel. After having descended the outer bank, he went about a furlong upon the level strand, before he came to the immediate bank of the river. This inner bank was so thickly covered with bushes and trees, among which he observed the tamarisk, the willow, and the oleander, that he could see no water till he had made his way through them. In this entangled thicket, so conveniently planted near the cooling stream, and remote from the habitations of men, several kinds of wild beasts were accustomed to repose, till the swelling of the river drove them from their retreats. This circumstance gave occasion to that beautiful allusion of the prophet :—‘ He shall come up like a lion, from the swelling of Jordan, against the habitation of the strong.’* The figure is highly poetical and striking. It is not easy to present a more terrible image to the mind, than a lion roused from his den by the roar of the swelling river, and chafed and irritated by its rapid and successive encroachments on his chosen haunts, till forced to quit his last retreat, he ascends to the higher grounds and the open country, and turns the fierceness of his rage against the helpless sheep-cots, or the unsuspecting villages. A destroyer equally fierce, and cruel, and irresistible, the devoted Edomites were to find in Nebuchadnezzar and his armies. [‘ The phrase “ swelling of Jordan,” says Dr Robinson, ‘ should be rendered, “ pride of Jordan,” as in Zechariah xii. 3, where the original word is the same. It refers to the verdure and the thickets along the banks, and not to the rise of the waters.’]

The water of the river, at the time of Mr Maundrell’s visit, was very turbid, and too rapid to allow a swimmer to stem its course.† Its breadth might be about

* Jeremiah xlix. 19.

† Chateaubriand found it a yellow current, which he could scarcely distinguish from the sands on its shores. It was deeply

twenty yards; and in depth it far exceeded his height. The rapidity and depth of the river, which are admitted by every traveller, although the volume of water seems now to be much diminished, illustrate those parts of Scripture which mention the fords and passages of Jordan. It no longer indeed rolls down into the Salt sea, so majestic a stream as in the days of Joshua, yet its ordinary depth is still about ten or twelve feet, so that it cannot even at present be passed but at certain places. Of this well-known circumstance, the men of Gilead took advantage in the civil war, which they were compelled to wage with their brethren:—‘The Gileadites took the passages of Jordan before the Ephraimites: . . . then they took him, and slew him at the passages of Jordan.’* The people of Israel, under the command of Ehud, availed themselves of the same advantage in the war with Moab:—‘And they went down after him, and took the fords of Jordan towards Moab, and suffered not a man to pass over.’† [The Jordan is fordable in many places in summer. But after the rains, when the channel is full, the fords are discernible only by the eye of an experienced native.]

But although the state of this river in modern times, completely justifies the incidental remarks of the sacred writers, it is evident that Maundrell was disconcerted by the shallowness of the stream, at the time of the year when he expected to see it overflowing all its banks; and his embarrassment seems to have increased when he contemplated the double margin within which it flowed. This difficulty, which has perhaps occurred to some others, may be explained by a remark which Dr Pococke has made on the river Euphrates. ‘The bed of the Euphrates,’ says that

sunk below its banks, and its sluggish stream rolled slowly on; vol. i. p. 420.

* Judges xii. 6.

† Judges iii. 28.

writer, ' was measured by some English gentlemen at Beer, and found to be six hundred and thirty yards broad ; but the river, only two hundred and fourteen yards over ; that they thought it to be nine or ten feet deep in the middle ; and were informed that it sometimes rises twelve feet perpendicularly. He observed that it had an inner and outer bank ; but says, it rarely overflows the inner bank : that when it does, they sow water melons and other fruits of that kind, as soon as the water retires, and have a great produce.* From this passage, Mr Harmer argues :—' Might not the overflowings of the Jordan be like those of the Euphrates, not annual, but much more rare ? ' The difficulty, therefore, will be completely removed, by supposing that it does not, like the Nile, overflow every year, as some authors by mistake had supposed, but like the Euphrates, only in some particular years ; but when it does, it is in the time of harvest. If it did not in ancient times annually overflow its banks, the majesty of God in dividing its waters, to make way for Joshua and the armies of Israel, was certainly the more striking to the Canaanites ; who, when they looked upon themselves as defended in an extraordinary manner by the casual swelling of the river, its breadth and rapidity being both so extremely increased, yet found it in these circumstances part asunder, and leave a way on dry land for the people of Jehovah.

The casual overflowing of the river, in Mr Harmer's opinion, seems to receive some confirmation from a passage in Josephus, where that writer informs his readers, that the Jordan was sometimes swelled in the spring, so as to be impassable in places where people were wont to go over in his time ; for, speaking of a transaction on the fourth of the month Dystrus, which answers to our March, or, as others reckon, to Febru-

* Pococke's Travels, vol. ii. p. 164.

ary, he gives an account of great numbers of people who perished in this river, into which they were driven by their enemies ; which, by the circumstances, appears to have happened in a few days after what was done on the fourth of Dystrus.*

But the solution offered by this respectable author is rather strained and unsatisfactory. The inspired writer of the book of Joshua uses language on that subject, which naturally suggests the idea of periodical inundations :—‘ Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest.’ The present time certainly indicates the general habit of the subject to which it refers, and, in this case, what commonly happens to the river. It may be swelled in the spring occasionally ; but it is not easy to discover a reason for the general remark of the sacred writer, if the inundations in the time of harvest were not annual. The causes of these inundations,—the melting of the snows on the top of Lebanon, and the former and latter rain,—uniformly take place at their appointed seasons ; but a steady periodical cause will certainly produce a corresponding effect. But if this reasoning be just, why did not Maundrell see the effect when he visited the river at the appointed time ? This question may be answered by another,—Why do the inundations even of the Nile sometimes fail ? The reason is obvious ; the rains in Abyssinia are not every season equally copious. In the same manner, if the snows on Lebanon, and the periodical rains, are less abundant in some seasons, it will easily account for the state of the river when it was visited by Maundrell. Admitting the fact, that the volume of water in the Jordan is diminished, and that he never overflows his banks as in ancient times, that intelligent traveller himself has sufficiently accounted for the circumstance : some of the waters may be drained off by secret channels, which is not uncommon in those parts of the

* Harmer, vol. iii. p. 388.

world ; and if the rapidity of the current be so great that he could not swim against it, the depth of the channel must be greatly increased since the days of Joshua and the Judges. To these, some other causes of considerable power may be added ; the present state of Lebanon, now for a long time deprived of its immense forests of cedar, which formerly exerted a powerful attraction on the humidity of the atmosphere, and served to accumulate the snows on the Sannin, while they screened from the burning rays of the sun the fountains and rills that fed the Jordan and his tributary streams : and the great extent to which the declivities of that noble mountain have been subjected to the arts of cultivation, by the Maronites, and other nations, who have taken refuge in its sequestered retreats from the intolerable oppression of the Turks, by which its numerous streams have been still farther diminished,—must, it is imagined, produce a very sensible difference in the volume of water which that river, once so celebrated for its full and majestic tide, now pours into the Salt Sea. Still, however, taking the mean depth of the stream during the whole year at nine feet, and admitting that it runs about two miles an hour, the Jordan will daily discharge into the Dead Sea about 6,090,000 tons of water.*

But although these causes must have produced a considerable diminution in the swellings of Jordan, we have the authority of a recent traveller for asserting, that they still take place at the appointed season, and exhibit a scene of no inconsiderable grandeur. In winter, the river overflows its narrow channel, which between the two principal lakes is not more than sixty or eighty feet broad, and swelled by the rains, forms a sheet of water sometimes a quarter of a league in breadth. The time of its overflowing is generally in March, when the snows melt on the mountain of the Sheich ; at which time, more than any other, its waters

* Shaw's Travels, vol. ii. p. 156.

are troubled and of a yellow hue, and its course impetuous.*

[The original words which, in our translation are rendered 'overflows its banks,' should be more properly rendered 'fills all its banks—has them full to the brink,' a translation which, while it is perfectly accordant with the original, gives the best and only true description of the state of Jordan in harvest, as observed by modern travellers, and thus its appearance at that season now will be found exactly the same as it was in the times of ancient Israel.

[Arnon, a small stream, rising at the foot of a hill of the same name in the Gilead range, on the east of Jordan, winds along the northern extremity of Moab, which it separates from the territories of Ammon and the tribe of Reuben, after which it discharges itself into the Dead Sea. On the banks of this rivulet a decisive battle was fought between the Israelites under Moses, and the Amorites under Sihon, the result of which was the complete discomfiture of that heathen prince.† 'The river of Gad,'‡ as it is also called, still continues to flow in its ancient channel over a course estimated at about sixty miles, which, though in summer almost constantly dry, exhibits very evident traces of being swept over by an impetuous torrent in winter.

[Jabbok, a brook, though sometimes styled by the sacred penmen a river, issues from the mountains of Gilead, and passing Aroer takes a north-westerly course, washes the city of Ramoth-Gilead, and enters the Jordan eight miles below the lake of Gennesareth. It is distinguished for its rapidity. Its channel is very rocky, its breadth about thirty feet, and yet, when full, it is generally deeper than the Jordan. Its banks are well wooded. Anciently it formed the boundary between the kingdom of the Amorites and Gaulonitis, the dominions of Og.§ Jacob, on his return from

* Volney's Travels, vol. ii. p. 104.

† 2 Sam. xxiv. 5.

G.

‡ Deut. ii. 26.

§ Deut. ii. 37; iii. 16.

Mesopotamia, came to this brook, a little to the north of Jericho. Here he wrestled with the angel, and here he met Esau.*]

Climate and Weather.—[The scriptural division of the year into six seasons of two months duration, was early adopted by the children of Israel, to regulate their domestic habits as well as their occupations in the field; and as the same mode of reckoning still obtains among the Arab population of the Holy Land, it is highly probable that experience has proved it to be peculiarly adapted to the physiological character of a country where, as in most countries of the East, the seasons succeed each other with undeviating regularity. Seed-time extends from the beginning of October to the beginning of December. Winter from the beginning of December to the beginning of February. The cold season, or winter solstice, from the beginning of February to the beginning of April. Harvest from the beginning of April to the beginning of June. Summer from the beginning of June to the beginning of August. Heat, or the summer solstice, from the beginning of August to the beginning of October. Generally speaking, the atmosphere of Palestine is serene and clear to a degree of which our humid and variable climate can give no idea; and although it is situated so near the equator, the Mediterranean on the west, and the numerous mountains and lakes that diversify its interior, contribute to preserve a salubrity of air even over the more level and exposed plains, unknown to other countries in the same latitude.] But from the mountainous nature of the country, and its diversified exposure, it seems to experience a great variety of temperature. From Tripoli to Sidon, the country is much colder than the rest of the coast farther to the north and to the south, and has a less regular change of seasons. The same remark applies to the mountainous parts of Judea, where the vegetable productions are much later than on the

* Genesis xxxii. 3, 22.

sea coast, or in the neighbourhood of Gaza. The air of Saphet, in Galilee, is, from its elevated situation, so fresh and cool, that the heats which, during the summer, are very great in the adjacent country, are hardly felt.* Josephus takes notice of the same differences of climate in his time; stating, that it was warm near Jericho, while it snowed in other parts of Judea. Egmont and Hayman found the heat in the plain of Jericho extremely troublesome, and for some hours in the day quite insupportable.† So early as the month of March, the heat actually proved fatal to several persons in the plain of Jericho, the year before these travellers arrived. In the great battle which Baldwin IV., King of Jerusalem, fought with the Saracens, not far from Tiberias in Galilee, a situation considerably more to the north than Jericho, many of his troops died by the heat. The archbishop of Tyre, who writes the narrative, asserts, that the heat at that time, which appears to have been the middle of summer, was so great, that as many died by the heat in both armies as by the sword. After the battle, in their return to their former encampment, an ecclesiastic of some distinction in Baldwin's army, unable to bear the vehement beams of the sun, was carried in a litter, yet he expired under mount Tabor, near the river Kishon.‡ Reland, in his *Palestina*, shows that Shunem was in the vicinity of Tabor;§ and at Shunem, as we learn from the sacred historian, the heat proved fatal to a child in the days of the prophet Elisha, in the time of harvest. How desirable then, how necessary to the comfort, and even to the very existence of life in those scorched regions, must be 'a covert from the heat, or the shadow of a great rock,' which at once excludes the sun-beam, and

* Shaw's *Travels*, vol. ii. p. 134; Reland. *Palestina*, p. 367.

† *Travels*, vol. i. p. 333.

‡ The sun-beam often strikes the European soldier with instant death.—*Forbes' Orient. Mem.* vol. ii. p. 70. See Man. & Cust. *ib.* p. 385.

§ Harmer's *Observations*, Dr Clarke's edition, vol. i. p. 4, note.

diffuses a refreshing coolness all around?* It is not without a strict regard to natural phenomena, that the spirit of inspiration directs the spouse to exclaim, 'I sat down under his shadow with great delight.'† Beautiful and striking as these figures are, they give us but a faint idea of that protection and comfort which the true believer derives from the favour of his Redeemer. When the storms of life beat keen and heavy upon his head; when the fires of persecution kindle and blaze around him; when Satan desires to have him, that he may sift him as wheat, and an accusing conscience fills his bosom with dismay,—he seeks and finds repose in the atoning blood of his Saviour, in the efficacy of his intercession, and in the power of his omnipotent arm. The spreading tree may wither, and the stupendous rock may be tumbled from its base, and the weary traveller may find shelter under them no more; but the mercy of the Lord endures for ever, and he is in every age, and in every place, a present help in the time of trouble.

The fields of Canaan are refreshed with frequent and copious rains, while some of the neighbouring countries are scarcely ever moistened with a shower. In the winter months, the rain falls indiscriminately; but seldom in the summer. Soon after the heats commence, the grass withers, the flower fades, every green thing is dried up by the roots, and the fields, so lately clothed with the richest verdure, and adorned with the loveliest flowers, are converted into a brown and arid wilderness. To the uniform withered appearance of the fields during the reign of an eastern summer, and not to any particular year of drought, the psalmist refers in these plaintive terms:—'My moisture is turned into the drought of summer.'‡ When conviction slept, and conscience was silent, the soul of David resembled a field refreshed by the genial showers of heaven; but the moment God in anger entered into judgment with

* Isaiah xxxii. 2.

† Song ii. 3.

‡ Psalm xxxii. 4.

him, and set his sins in order before his face, his courage failed, his beauty was turned into corruption, and his strength into weakness ; ' the commandment came, sin revived, and he died.'

Though the summer in Syria is commonly dry, the heavens are sometimes overcast, and a smart thunder shower suddenly rushes down to refresh the parched soil.* One of these fell at Aleppo in the night between the first and second of July 1743 ; but it was regarded as a very uncommon occurrence at that season. It is probably still more extraordinary at Jerusalem ; for Jerome, who lived long in Palestine, denies, in his commentary on Amos, that he had ever seen rain in those provinces, and especially in Judea, in the end of June, or in the month of July. It may, however, occasionally fall, though Jerome had never seen it, as it did at Aleppo, while Dr Russel resided in that city. But such an occurrence by no means invalidates the proof which the prophet Samuel gave of his divine mission, when he called for thunder and rain from heaven in the time of wheat harvest ;† since a very rare and unusual event immediately happening without any preceding appearance of it, upon the prediction of a person professing himself to be a prophet of the Lord, and giving it as an attestation of his sustaining that character, is a sufficient proof that his affirmation is true, although a similar event has sometimes happened without any such declared interposition of God, and therefore universally understood to be casual and without design. Nor should it be forgotten that this thunder storm in the book of Samuel, seems to have happened in the day time, while the people of Israel were celebrating the accession of Saul to the throne ; a circumstance which, from its singularity, added considerable energy to this event, and, perhaps, was to them a sufficient proof of the miraculous interference of Jehovah. Dr

* Russel's Hist. of Aleppo, vol. i. p. 172, and vol. ii. p. 285.

† 1 Samuel xii. 16.

Russel informs us, that the rains in those countries usually fall in the night, as did those extraordinary thunder storms already mentioned, which happened in the month of July.*

The rainy season is limited to the autumnal and winter months; for, although some showers occasionally fall in the time of harvest, it is reckoned a very uncommon occurrence. In this light Harmer thinks it was viewed by Solomon :†—‘ As snow in summer, and as rain in harvest, so honour is not seemly for a fool.’‡ But the wise man seems rather to have had his eye on the injurious effects of rain in that season of the year. As rain in harvest interrupts the labours of the reaper, and injures the fruits of the earth, so vicious and unprincipled men, when they happen to be crowned with honour, and elevated to places of power and trust, uniformly prove a nuisance to society; instead of being a ‘ terror to evil doers, and a praise to them that do well,’ they encourage the wicked, and depress the good and the virtuous.

Nor does that affecting historical incident, recorded in the second book of Samuel, refer to the ordinary state of the weather in the time of harvest, but to an unusual drought and scarcity, that God, in his just displeasure, sent upon the land of Israel, on account of Saul and his bloody house; which were not removed till seven of his sons were hanged up by the Gibeonites before the Lord:—‘ Then Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah, took sackcloth, and spread it for her upon the rock, from the beginning of harvest, until water dropped upon them out of heaven, and suffered neither the birds of the air to rest upon them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night.’§

But although these texts, when viewed in their connexion, do not seem to contain any allusion to the ge-

* Russel's History of Aleppo, vol. ii. p. 282.

† Harmer's Observ. vol. i. p. 22.

‡ Prov. xxvi. 1.

§ 2 Samuel xxi. 10.

meral character of the harvest months, no doubt ought to be entertained of the fact stated in the beginning of the section. The time of harvest was generally dry, a circumstance favourable to the labours of the husbandman, on whose success depended the subsistence of the poor and the needy. But the winter months were often extremely cold and rainy; thus Ezra describes the ninth month, which answers to our January, 'as a time of much rain,' so heavy and incessant, that the people could not stand without to hear the law read, and to rectify the disorders that had crept into the congregation.*

When Dr Shaw was at Tozer, in December 1727, they had a small drizzling shower, which continued two hours; and so little precaution was taken against accidents of this kind, that several of the houses, which, as usual in that country, are built only with palm branches, mud and tiles baked in the sun, corresponding perhaps to the untempered mortar of Ezekiel,† and explanatory of its nature, fell down by imbibing the moisture of the shower. Nay, the Doctor firmly believed, if the drops had been either larger, or the shower of a longer continuance, or in the language of the prophet, 'overflowing,' the whole city would have dissolved and dropt in pieces.‡

The time of the first rains is differently stated by modern travellers. According to Dr Shaw, the first autumnal rains usually fall about the eleventh of November: from a manuscript journal of travels in those countries, Mr Harmer found that the rain fell in the Holy Land, on the second of November; and he was assured by the historian of the revolt of Ali Bey, who lived some years in Palestine, that the rains begin to fall there about the eighteenth day of September; at first they descend in slight showers, but as the season

* Ezra x. 9, 13.

† Ezek. xlii. 11.

‡ Shaw's Travels, vol. I. p. 250.

advances, they become very copious and heavy, though never continual.*

Dr Shaw seems to suppose, that the Arabs of Barbary do not begin to break up their grounds till the first rains of autumn fall; while the author of the history of Ali Bey's revolt, supposes that they sometimes plough their land before the descent of the rain, because the soil is then light and easily worked. This statement contains nothing incredible; grain will remain long in the earth unhurt, and vegetate as soon as the descending showers communicate sufficient moisture. The oriental husbandman may cultivate his field, as is often done in other countries, in expectation of rain; a circumstance to which Solomon seems to refer:—‘He that observeth the wind shall not sow, and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap.’† If they never sowed in the East but when the soil was moistened with rain, they could have no reason to observe whether the wind threatened rain or promised fair weather; but if the seed was cast into the ground previous to the descent of the rain, they might naturally enough be induced to wait till they observed the signs of its approach.

The rainy season in the beginning of winter, by the concurring testimony of travellers, is commonly introduced by a gale of wind from the north-east. In Syria, the winds are variable in November, and the two succeeding months; seldom strong, but more inclined to the north and east than any of the other quarters. They continue to blow nearly in the same direction, till about the end of February, when they begin to blow hard westerly. The weather in April is in general fair and clear; seldom dark or cloudy, except when it rains, which it does in hard thunder showers, as in the last month, but not so often. When light northerly or easterly breezes happen to blow,

* Harmer, vol. i. p. 11.

† Ecclesiastes xi. 4.

they have commonly a few close hazy days; but the westerly winds are generally fresh.

In the East Indies the commencement and the breaking of the monsoons are generally very severe, and the rain descends in the most astonishing torrents. In a few hours the inhabitants find themselves in a liquid plain. The high and the low grounds are equally covered, and exhibit the appearance of an immense lake; and surrounded by thick darkness which prevents them from distinguishing a single object, except such as the vivid glare of lightning displays in horrible forms. In the winter months the mountain floods swell the small rivers of India in a wonderful manner. Within a few hours they often rise twenty or thirty feet above their usual height, and run with astonishing rapidity; and the larger rivers, before gentle and pellucid, are then furious and destructive, sweeping away whole villages with their inhabitants and cattle, while tigers and other furious animals from the wilds join the general wreck, and unite their horrid voices with the cries of old men and helpless women, and the shrieks of their expiring children, in its passage to the ocean. It is in such a scene that the beauty of Elihu's speech to Job, in which he mentions 'the great rain of his strength,'* are properly understood.† Even in the milder climate of Judea the rains pour down three or four days and nights together, as vehemently as if they would drown the country; sweeping away in their furious course the produce of the field, and the soil on which it grew; the flocks and herds and human dwellings, with their hapless inmates in one promiscuous ruin.‡ Far different are the feelings awakened in the mind by the sight of a majestic pure and quiet river, on whose verdant pastures the flocks repose, or drink, without alarm or danger of its flowing waters. So full of ma-

* Job xxxvii. 6.

† Forbes' Oriental Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 120, and vol. iii. p. 52.

‡ Vitriaco, as quoted by Harm. vol. i. pp. 197, 198; Obs. vol. i. p. 5.

jesty, and gentleness, neither alarming the fears, endangering the safety, nor encouraging the carelessness of genuine Christians, are the consolations of true religion. So the Psalmist felt, when he selected the loveliest image in the natural world to convey an idea of the rich and ample provision which the divine bounty has made for man. 'He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.'*

In the rainy season, the wind alters and begins to blow from the west in February, and continues in the same point till May; after which, seldom any more rain falls in Syria till autumn, when the wind blows commonly from the north-east.† These remarks will throw light on that part of our Lord's address to the Jews, in which he adverts to the state of the weather:—'When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, there cometh a shower, and so it is.'‡ This declaration our Lord seems to have made to the people in spring; for his words entirely correspond with the state of the weather in that season; but not in the close of autumn, and the beginning of winter. The lilies then, which are mentioned in the same chapter, might be growing at that very time, before the eyes of his auditors:—'Consider the lilies how they grow, they toil not, they spin not, and yet I say unto you that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass, which is to-day in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith.'§

A very small cloud is often the forerunner of a violent storm or hurricane. The cloud like a man's hand, which the servant of Elijah saw rising over the sea, is, for want of due observation, commonly regarded as an unmeaning circumstance in the prophetic history. In-

* Psalm xxiii. 2.

† Russel's Hist. of Aleppo, vol. i. p. 65.

‡ Luke xii. 54. [The observation still holds true at Jerusalem, where our Lord uttered these words.—*Robinson*, ii. 97.]—*Editor*.

§ Luke xii. 27.

telligent travellers know that it is a prognostic of rain. The first indication of the tornado or the hurricane, is a dark spot on the edge of the horizon. This gradually increases, till the whole heavens are robed in black, and a most tremendous uproar of the elements ensues. When its fury is spent, and all is comparatively clear, the reappearance of the little cloud is the undoubted evidence, as it is the forerunner of another tempest.*

[‘ Every morning,’ says Mr Bruce, ‘ about nine, a small cloud, not above four feet broad, appears in the East, whirling violently round, as if upon an axis; but when arrived nearly overhead, it first abates its motion, then loses its form and extends itself, and seems to call up vapours from all opposite quarters. These clouds having attained nearly the same height, rush against each other with great violence, burst in torrents of rain, and put me always in mind of Elijah foretelling rain on Mount Carmel.’ ‘ I have often,’ says Dr Clarke, ‘ seen this repeated several times a-day. A cloud about the *size of a man’s hand*, first appeared; this gradually increased till the whole heavens were *robed in black*, and a *dreadful storm* ensued. When all again seemed comparatively clear, the appearance of the hand-like cloud was the *sure forerunner* of another storm.’ But this result would not be followed by the same appearance of the sky at other seasons of the year. Towards the end of harvest the morning cloud, which darkens the horizon very early every day, disappears with the ascent of the sun in the heavens.† To the simple and inexperienced eye they are deceitful prognostics of the shower; and with great beauty, and to the mind of the oriental with great effect, the apostle Jude compares false teachers, those ministers who, with the professed character, have neither the spirit nor right principles

* Harmer’s Observations, vol. i. p. 31, note by the editor.

† Hosea vi. 4; xiii. 3.

of the servants of Christ, to those light fleecy clouds, which are 'without water.']

The winter in Canaan is extremely wet and cold. In the time of the crusades, many of the troops perished through want of provisions, intenseness of the cold, and the heaviness of the winter rains. Fulcherius, who was in the retinue of the prince of Antioch, in his journey to Jerusalem, and saw many of both sexes die, besides numbers of their cattle, says, they were kept wet for four or five days together, by the continual rains. So great is the quantity of rain which occasionally falls, and so intense the cold, that the elements seem to conspire the ruin of every living creature that is exposed to their fury. It is agreed by all those who have written on the subject, that all the winter months in Palestine are rainy; and, by consequence, that Judea is not one of those regions where it only rains at the equinoxes.*

The Hebrew word Horeph, accordingly, which we translate winter, in Mr Harmer's opinion, seems rather to mean precisely the wet season. 'O that I were as in months past,' says Job, 'as in the days when God preserved me, as I was in the days of my winter!' In the days of his moist time, when, as he expresses it, 'my root was spread out by the waters, and the dew lay all night upon my branch: my glory was fresh in me.'† Not in the days of his disgrace then, the days in which he was stript of his ornaments, as an herb of its leaves and flowers in the winter; but like a plant, in the latter part of the rainy season, before the violent heats come on, which scorch and burn up every green thing.‡

But the term Horeph, from the verb haraph, to strip, literally means the stripping season; and signifies that part of the year which strips vegetables of their flowers, fruit, and leaves, and, consequently, the earth of its

* Harmer's Observations, vol. i. p. 44.

† Job xxix. 2, 19, 20.

‡ Harm. vol. i. p. 38-40.

beauty. It is opposed to *Kaitz*, from *koutz*, to awake or quicken, the quickening or awakening season, and includes both autumn and winter. Is it probable that the cold and rainy season of winter would be an object of desire to Job, when 'the heavens are filled with clouds, when the earth swims in rain, and all nature wears a lowering countenance?' It is more natural to render the phrase, in the days of his autumn, which in those climates is a delightful season; for then the heats are abated, the earth is moistened with dew, or refreshed with the first showers of the latter rain, and the various fruits of the earth, to use the beautiful language of inspiration, are ready to drop into the mouth of the eater; or, the trees and fields being stripped of their produce, are heaped on his board. The afflicted patriarch certainly referred to the end of harvest, in allusion to which he might say, with strict propriety, 'my root was spread out by the waters, and the dew lay all night upon my branches; my glory was fresh in me.'

The frost is sometimes so very severe about Jerusalem, and even in some of the lower parts of Judea, that the ground in winter is covered with snow, which occasionally falls in very great quantities, and is attended with a most piercing cold. The hapless traveller is then reduced to very great distress. The ground is alternately deluged with rain, or encrusted with ice, or loaded with snow; his beasts of burden are swept away by the sudden torrents which descend from the mountains, or swallowed up in the treacherous morass. Storms of hail beat around him with incredible violence, and the winds blow with so much vehemence, that the stakes of his tent are torn up and carried to a distance; his cattle which escape the quagmire, often die through fatigue, cold, and wet; his provisions are spoiled, his arms are covered with rust, his clothes are damaged, and his life exposed to the most imminent danger.*

* Harmer, vol. i. p. 40, &c. Hail-storms are so violent in some parts of Persia as frequently to destroy the cattle in the fields.—

The oriental hail-storm is a most terrific agent; the hailstones are sometimes as big as walnuts, and rather resemble large masses of ice which scatter desolation and terror over the face of nature with irresistible fury. So destructive, so terrible were their ravages in Egypt, that the inspired writer pronounces it 'very grievous;' 'and the hail smote throughout all the land of Egypt, all that was in the field, both man and beast; and the hail smote every herb of the field, and broke every tree of the field.* Nor were the hailstones which Jehovah cast down upon the Amorites, in the battle with his chosen people, inferior in size or efficiency. 'They were more who died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.†

Such extreme colds, however, are not experienced unless particular winds prevail; even at Christmas, when the air is calm, travellers inform us, it is pleasant to sit with open windows. But when the sky is agitated by those tempestuous winds, known to sailors by the name of Levanters, the cold is so piercing, the conflict of hail, of ice, of snow, and of rain is so terrible,

Kinnier's Geog. Mem. p. 158. [The prodigious size of the hailstones, and the violence with which they fall, make them always very injurious to property, and often fatal to life. Diodorus Siculus mentions a storm of hail which happened at Rhodes in the year 316 before Christ, when the hailstones were upwards of a pound in weight; and the houses were thrown down by the weight. Of this violent and fatal character were the hail-storms that destroyed the cattle of the Egyptians (Exod. ix. 18; Psalm cv. 32; lxxviii. 47, 48), and at a subsequent period the army of the Amorites (Josh. x. 11). Such a storm overtook the British fleet during the expedition in Egypt:— 'On the 8th February,' says Sir R. Wilson, 'commenced the most violent hail-storm ever remembered, and which continued two days and nights intermittingly; the hail, or rather the ice, stones were as big as large walnuts. The camps were deluged with a torrent of them two feet deep, which, pouring from the mountains, swept every thing before. The scene of confusion on shore, by the horses breaking loose, and the men being unable to face the storm, or remain still in the freezing deluge, surpasses description. It is not in the power of language to convey an adequate idea of such a tempest.'—*History of the British Expedition to Egypt*, vol. i. p. 8.]—*Editor.*

* Exod. ix. 24, 25.

† Joshua x. 11.

that many of the poor people and their cattle perish. We are apt to wonder that an eastern writer, in a hymn composed for the use of ancient Israel, should celebrate the praise of Jehovah in these terms :—‘ He giveth his snow like wool, he scatters the hoar frost like ashes, he casteth forth his ice like morsels : who can stand before his cold ?’* [An oriental historian, describing the flight of a defeated army near Ascalon, says, ‘ For haste they threw away their armour and clothes, but so sunk under the cold, together with want of food, slippery and rugged roads, which were every where furrowed and broken up by the torrents, that they were taken captives in the woods, on the mountains, in the wilderness, and sometimes threw themselves in the way of their enemies, rather than perish through cold and want. It is impossible to imagine a more striking commentary on the admonition of our Lord to his disciples, ‘ pray ye that your flight may not be in winter.’†] But the preceding statements will prove that the Royal Psalmist did not mean to describe the rigours of a northern, but an oriental winter, and that he copied accurately from nature.

If the snows which fall in Judea resemble those which travellers have seen in other parts of the East, the sacred writer displays in that noble poem an energy and correctness of which we are not commonly aware. We learn from Chardin, in a manuscript note on this passage of the Psalmist, that towards the Black Sea in Iberia and Armenia, and therefore he imagines in other countries also, ‘ the snow falls in flakes as big as walnuts ; but not being either hard or very compact, it does no other harm than presently to cover and overwhelm the traveller.’ The sacred writer had probably seen flakes of equal size on the mountains of Judea ; but whether he had or not, that Divine Spirit, under whose unerring influence he wrote, who lays up the

* Psalm cxlvii. 16, 17.

† Matthew xxiv. 20.

snow in his treasures, knew that they existed, and marked the spot where they fell. He apprised his servant of the fact, and suggested the beautiful and strikingly correct figure to his mind, 'He giveth his snow like wool.'

The description that Jerome gives of the Holy Land, in his letter to Marcella, may seem hardly consistent with the picture which the Psalmist draws of a Syrian winter:—'If it is summer, the shade of the trees will afford a place of retirement; if autumn, the leaves under the trees, united with the temperature of the air, will point to a place where you may enjoy yourself in quiet. In the spring the ground is painted with flowers; and the singing of psalms will be more sweet when joined with the music of birds. If it be the time of wintry cold and snow, I will buy no wood, and yet be warmer than you are at Rome, whether sleeping or awake; at least I am sure I shall guard myself from cold with less fuel.'*

This christian father lived long in Palestine, and therefore seems every way entitled to credit. But a very little attention will convince the candid inquirer, that the difference between the Psalmist and Jerome is only apparent; for in this very passage the latter admits, that in winter the weather is cold, and the ground is covered with snow; he only asserts, that in general the winter is milder in Palestine than at Rome. Nor ought it to be forgotten, that his letter was written for a special purpose—to prevail upon his friend to leave Rome and settle at Jerusalem. But it is well known how difficult it is in such circumstances, to prevent imagination from touching the picture with her vivid pencil, and imparting a richness of colouring which sober judgment will scarcely approve. That Jerome did not sufficiently guard against her magic power on this occasion, we have reason to suspect from a passage in his commentary on the charge of our Lord

* Jerome, vol. iv. p. 553.

to his disciples, 'Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter;' where he distinctly admits, that the cold in Palestine is frequently too severe to be endured by those who fled before their enemies, and who, to avoid discovery, might be glad to conceal themselves in the deserts, which the extreme severity of the cold would not allow.

But admitting that the glowing description of Jerome is actually copied from nature, still no real difference between him and the inspired writer exists; for we learn from other sources of information, that in the depth of winter it is frequently warm, nay, almost hot in the open air; and, by consequence, from the fall of the leaf in November, and the coming on of the winter storms about the 12th of December, a recluse may enjoy himself very comfortably in his meditations abroad. It is evidently to this part of the season that Jerome refers. But, on the other hand, it is often piercingly cold, even to those that are lately come from a cold climate.*

In those frequent intervals of returning warmth, which relieve the severity of an oriental winter, the people of the east enjoy the conversation of their friends; the poorer class in the open air sauntering about, and sitting under the walls of their houses; people of rank and fashion in the porches and gateways, where the master of a family receives visits, and transacts business,—few persons, not even the nearest relations, being admitted into their apartments except upon extraordinary occasions.†

To these circumstances the prophet Ezekiel seems to refer in the following passage :—'Also, thou son of man, the children of thy people are still talking against (or rather concerning) thee by the walls, and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what

* Russel's Hist. vol. i. p. 49.

† Pococke's Travels, vol. i. pp. 83, 175; Forbes' Orient. Mem. vol. iii. p. 216.

is the word that cometh forth from the Lord.* Our translators render the original words *Beha*, against thee; the Septuagint, *περι σου*, of or concerning thee. This is the more singular, as the same particle is rendered in other parts of Scripture, Of or concerning: thus, in the eighty-seventh Psalm, 'Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of the Lord.' The following words incontestibly prove they were not speaking against Ezekiel, but in his favour:—'And they come unto thee as the people cometh: and they sit before thee as my people; and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouth they shew much love; but their heart goeth after covetousness.' But if *their mouth showed much love*, they did not speak against the prophet, but in his commendation. These conversations respecting the prophet were held in winter; for it was the tenth month, answering to the latter end of December, or beginning of January, when the orientals sit under the walls for the benefit of the sun, or in the porches or gateways of their houses.

As the Copts in Egypt commonly spend their holidays in conversing with one another under the walls of their habitation, so Mr Harmer is of opinion, that these words of Ezekiel may refer to such times. And, if so, he asks, will they shew that the Israelites observed their sabbaths in captivity? And that so early as the time of the first destruction of Jerusalem, they used to assemble on those days, to hear if the prophets had received any messages from the Lord in that week, and to receive those advices which their calamitous circumstances made peculiarly seasonable? It is very probable, that the Jews, in those early times, assembled to hear the instructions of the prophets, and for the public worship of their God, so far as their painful circumstances might permit; but the words of Ezekiel under consideration, appear to be of a more general character, referring as well to the public meetings of

* Ezekiel xxxiii. 30.

the synagogue, as to the private parties and conversations of the people.

The orientals distinguish their winter into two parts, or rather the depth of winter from the commencement and termination of the season, by the severity of the cold. This which lasts about forty days, they call Murbania. To this rigorous part of the season, the wise man seems to refer in that beautiful passage of the Song :—‘ Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone ; the flowers appear on the earth : the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.’* If we explain this text by the natural phenomenon, these words, ‘ the rain is over and gone,’ cannot be considered as an exposition of the preceding clause, ‘ for, lo, the winter is past ;’ and as denoting, that the moist part of the year was entirely gone, along with which, Dr Russel assures us, all rural delights abandon the plains of Syria : but the meaning is, that the Murbania, the depth of winter, is past and over, and the weather become agreeably warm ; the rain has just ceased, and, consequently, has left the sure and agreeable prospect of undisturbed and pleasant serenity for several days. It had been no inducement to the spouse, to quit her apartments with the view of enjoying the pleasures of the country, to be told, that the rainy season had completely terminated, and the intense heats of summer, under which almost every plant and flower sickens and fades away, had commenced. This view of the text corresponds with the state of matters in the religious world, and with the experience of every Christian. The storms of life do not always blow with equal violence : the privations and the sorrows of the believer, are not equally numerous and severe at all times ; often the storm at the command of his heavenly Father is changed into a calm ;

* Song ii. 10.

but the season of tranquillity is commonly of short duration, and is but comparatively bright and serene.

The inhabitants of the great towns of Syria, during the pleasant weather in winter, frequently leave their homes, and give entertainments to their friends under tents, pitched in the country for that purpose. In April, and part of May, they retire to the gardens ; and in the heat of summer, receive their guests in the summer-houses, or under the shade of the trees.* The same custom seems, from the invitation of the Bridegroom, to have prevailed in the land of Canaan in the time of Solomon. The inhabitants of Aleppo make their excursions very early in the season ; and the cold weather is not supposed by Solomon to have ceased long before, since it is distinctly mentioned. In Syria, the narcissus flowers during the whole of the Murbania ; hyacinths and violets, at latest, before it is quite over. Therefore, when Solomon says, the flowers appear on the earth, he does not mean the time when the earliest flowers disclose their bloom, but when the verdant turf is thickly studded with all the rich, the gay, and the diversified profusion of an oriental spring. This delightful season is ushered in at Aleppo, about the middle of February, by the appearance of a small crane's bill on the bank of the river, which meanders through its extensive gardens ;† and a few days after, so rapid is the progress of vegetation, that all the beauty of spring is displayed : about the same time, the birds renew their songs. When Thevenot visited Jordan on the 16th of April, he found the little woods on the margin of the river filled with nightingales in full chorus.‡ This is rather earlier than at Aleppo, where they do not appear till nearly the end of the month. These facts illustrate the strict pro-

* Russel's Hist. vol. i. p. 49, and vol. ii. p. 17 ; Richardson's Trav. vol. ii. pp. 473, 474.

† Russel's Hist. vol. i. p. 70.

‡ Travels, part i. p. 192.

priety of Solomon's description, every circumstance of which is accurately copied from nature.

In Palestine, and the surrounding regions, the coldness of the night, in all the seasons of the year, is often very inconvenient. The king of Judah is described by the prophet as sitting in his winter-house in the ninth month, corresponding to the latter end of November and part of December, with a fire burning on the hearth before him.* This answers to the state of the weather at Aleppo, where, as Russel informs us, the most delicate people make no fires till the end of November. The Europeans resident in Syria, he observes in a note, continue them till March; the people of the country, seldom longer than February; but fires are occasionally made in the wet seasons, not only in March, but in April also, and would be acceptable at the gardens, sometimes even in May. Dr Pococke, in his journey to Jerusalem, being conducted by an Arab to his tent, found his wife and family warming themselves by the fire on the 17th of March; and on the 8th of May, he was treated with a fire to warm him, by the governor of Galilee.† The nights in that season are often very cold; and of this the inhabitants are rendered more sensible by the heats of the day. In May and June, and even in July, travellers very often put on fires in the evening.‡ This statement clearly discovers the reason why the people who went to Gethsemane to apprehend our Lord, kindled a fire of coals, to warm themselves at the time of the Passover, which happened in the spring.

[Mr Biddulph, Chaplain to the British factory at Aleppo, expresses himself in his letters much surprised at finding the weather so warm at Jerusalem at the time he was in that city, when at the same season the people who had been out to apprehend our Lord needed a fire. It appeared strange to him that Peter should

* Jer. xxxvi. 22.

† Travels, vol. ii. pp. 5, 62.

‡ Russel's Hist. vol. i. p. 69.

have crept near a fire at a time when he felt the heat of the sun overpowering. But after residing in Jerusalem for a few days, and experiencing the extraordinary transitions from the heat of day to the extreme cold of night, his wonder vanished.]

But it is not only in elevated situations, as that on which the city of Jerusalem stands, that the cold of the night is so piercing; the traveller has to encounter its severity on the low-lying plains, by the sea side, and in the sandy deserts, where, during the day, beneath the scorching sunbeam, he could scarcely breathe. The severe cold of the morning compelled Mr Doubdan to remain some hours at Joppa, in a poor Greek hovel, before he could set out for Rama.* At ancient Tyre, his condition was still more distressing. On the 16th of May, he found the heat near that once renowned mart of nations so great, that though he and his party took their repast on the grass, under a large tree, by the side of a small river, yet he complains, 'they were burnt up alive.' After attempting in vain to prosecute their voyage, night overtook them at the ruins of Tyre. Near those ruins, they were obliged to pass a considerable part of the night, not without suffering greatly from the cold, which was as violent and sharp as the heat of the day had been intense. Our traveller acknowledges that he shook, as in the depth of winter, more than two or three full hours.

In the midst of the burning deserts, where the heat is increased tenfold by the sandy surface on which it beats, the traveller encounters much inconvenience, and even distress, from the chilling cold of the night. Mr Bruce, the Abyssinian traveller, lost all his camels in one night by the cold, in the deserts of Senaar.† In the year 1779, the Bedouin Arabs plundered an English caravan in the desert, between

* Doubdan, *Voy. de la Terre Sainte*, pp. 42, 43.

† *Travels*, Edinburgh edition, vol. vi. p. 498; *Campbell's Journey over land*, p. 101.

Suez and Cairo. Seven of the Europeans, stripped entirely naked by their inhuman spoilers, in the hope of reaching Cairo, pushed forward into the desert. Fatigue, thirst, hunger, and the heat of the sun, destroyed one after another: one alone survived all these horrors. During three days and two nights, he wandered in this parched and sandy desert, frozen at night by the north wind (it being in the month of January), and burnt by the sun during the day, without any other shade but a single bush, into which he thrust his head among the thorns, or any drink but his own urine. At length, on the third day, he was descried by an Arab, who conducted him to his tent, and took care of him for three days, with the utmost humanity. At the expiration of that time, the merchants of Cairo, apprized of his situation, procured him a conveyance to that city, where he arrived in the most deplorable condition.* From these important facts, we may conclude that even in those parched countries, a fire in the night, in the middle of May, might be very requisite, and highly acceptable. The hapless wanderer, whose affecting story Volney records, was frozen at night by the north wind, and burnt by the dreadful heat of the sun during the day; and the patriarch Jacob complains, that he was for many years exposed to similar hardships in the plains of Mesopotamia:— ‘ In the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night.’† Nothing assuredly was remoter from the design of Volney (a proud and insolent enemy of revelation), than to confirm the truth of Scripture history; his statement clearly proves, that Jacob’s complaint was not hastily made, but strictly agreeable to truth.

In the rainy season, the clouds pour down their treasures at certain intervals with great violence, for three or four days together. Such abundant and violent rains, in a mountainous country like Judea, by washing away the soil, must often be attended with

* Volney’s Travels, vol. I. pp. 57, 58.

† Genesis xxxi. 40.

very serious consequences to the dwellings of the inhabitants, which happen to be placed within the reach of the rapid inundations. At Aleppo, the violent rains often wash down stone walls ; and Dr Russel mentions a remarkable instance of a hamlet with a fig garden, in the Castravan mountains, being suddenly removed by the swelling waters to a great distance. It was to an event of this kind, which is by no means uncommon in those regions, that our Lord refers :—‘ Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like : he is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock ; and when the flood arose, the stream beat violently upon that house, and could not shake it ; for it was founded upon a rock. But he that heareth and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth, against which the stream beat vehemently, and immediately it fell ; and the ruin of that house was great.’*

The former and latter rains is a phrase quite familiar to every reader of the Scriptures.† The distinction which it announces is founded in nature, and is of great importance in those parts of the world. At Aleppo, the drought of summer commonly terminates in September, by some heavy showers, which occasionally continue some days ; after which there is an interval of fine weather, of between twenty and thirty days, when the showers return, which are called the second

* Luke vi. 48. [It is probable, that, as our Lord drew most of his illustrations of nature from the scenes around him, some deep ravines in the sides of the mountains, bore witness to the fresh devastation of the rains, and that some cottages in the neighbourhood, well known to his hearers, had been swept away by the devastating torrent. To understand fully our Lord’s comparison, however, the reader must bear in mind, that the country villages of Palestine, as of the East generally, are but frail structures formed of mud, palm-branches, and tiles baked in the sun. Such a tenement cannot stand the force of an impetuous current.]—*Editor*.

† Deut. xi. 14 ; Job xxix. 23 ; Prov. xvi. 15 ; Jer. iii. 3 ; v. 24 ; Hosea vi. 3 ; Joel ii. 23 ; Zech. x. 1.

rains. The first rains in Syria fall between the 26th of September and the 6th of October ;* but it is later in Judea ; the former rain, according to Dr Shaw, descending in Palestine about the beginning of November. The seasons in the East are exceedingly regular, yet it is not to be supposed that they admit of no variation ; the descent of the first and second rain occasionally varying a whole month. But the first and second rains of Syria, mentioned by Russel, do not seem to correspond with the former and latter rains of the Holy Scriptures. This is the opinion of Jerome, who lived long in Palestine ; nor do the natural historians of those countries take any notice of the first and second rains in autumn ; but uniformly speak of the former and latter rains. It is therefore of some importance to inquire, what are the times of the year when these rains descend. Here it may be proper to observe, that rain in the vernal season is represented by oriental writers as of great advantage. The more wet the spring, the later the harvest, and the more plentiful the crop.† In Barbary, the vernal rains are indispensably requisite to secure the hopes of the husbandman. If the latter rains fall as usual in the middle of April, he reckons his crop secure ; but is extremely doubtful as to the result of his labours, if these happen to fail.‡ This accounts well for the great value which Solomon sets upon them:—‘In the light of the king’s countenance is life, and his favour is as a cloud of the latter rain.’§ To this may be added, that the words translated the former and latter rains, are not expressive of first and second ; and, by consequence, do not refer to the rains mentioned by Russel, but mark a distinction of much greater importance. They must therefore be the same as the vernal rains, which are universally allowed to be of the utmost consequence in those regions.

An argument, however, which is commonly adduced

* Russel’s Hist. vol. i. p. 68.

† Russel’s Hist. vol. i. p. 70.

‡ Shaw, vol. i. p. 257.

§ Prov. xvi. 15.

in proof that the latter rain means the showers that fall in the spring, is in reality of no force; it is founded in these words of the prophet Joel:—‘He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain and the latter rain, in the first month.’* The word month is not in the original; which ruins the argument. The Septuagint accordingly renders the words, ‘he will rain upon you the former and the latter rain, as afore-time.’ Jerome understands the passage in the same sense; though he believed the latter rains were those of the spring.†

The following passage in the prophecies of Amos has been erroneously referred, by some commentators, to the vernal or latter rains:—‘Also I have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest; and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city; one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not, withered. So two or three cities wandered unto one city to drink water, but they were not satisfied,’ &c.‡ The latter rain falls in the middle or towards the end of April, from which, if there be three months to the harvest, as the prophet asserts, it must fall in the middle or towards the end of July. But at present in Syria, barley-harvest commences about the

* Joel ii. 23.

† Harm. v. i. p. 76. [The autumnal rains continue to fall in showers for two or three days at a time, and generally in the night. During November and December they fall heavily; afterwards they are less frequent and copious. But the whole period from October to March is a season of rain without any regularly intervening term of prolonged fair weather; there is rarely any after the beginning of April. Unless there be some change, therefore, in the climate since the New Testament times, the early and the latter rains, for which the husbandman waited long (James v. 7), seem rather to have implied the first showers of autumn which revived the parched and thirsty earth, and prepared it for the seed; and the later showers of spring, which continued to refresh and forward both the ripening crops and vernal products of the fields. These rains were always productive of cold.—*Robinson.*—*Editor.*]

‡ Amos iv. 7, 8.

beginning of May ; and that, as well as the wheat-harvest, is finished by the 20th of the same month. In Judea, the harvest is still more early.* The rain, therefore, which God threatens to withhold from his people, must have commonly fallen in the first part of February. That a quantity of snow descends at Jerusalem at this time, which is of great importance to the succeeding harvest, by making the fountains to overflow a little afterwards, is confirmed by the authority of Dr Shaw.† It is no real objection to this view, that the prophet threatens to withhold the rain ; for the great difference of temperature in Palestine may be the cause of its snowing in the mountainous districts, while it rains in other parts of the same country. By the moderate quantity of rain or snow which falls in the month of February, the reservoirs of water on which the cities of Palestine chiefly depend, are filled, and the prospect of a fruitful and plentiful year is opened. Of so great importance to the subsistence and comfort of that people are these rains, that, upon their descent, they make rejoicings similar to those of the Egyptians upon the cutting of the Nile. The prophet evidently refers to both these circumstances ; to the succeeding harvest, in these words : ‘ the piece or field upon which it rained not, withered ;’ to the state of the cistern in these : ‘ so two or three cities wandered into one city to drink water, but they were not satisfied.’ Hence, Mr Harmer, who treats Jerome on this occasion with undue severity, is wrong in supposing that the inspired writer refers to the single circumstance of filling their cisterns with water. He refers to both, and this Jerome distinctly notices. ‘ God suspended the rain,’ says that father, ‘ not only to punish them with want of bread, but also with thirst ; for in those countries in

* Russel, vol. i. p. 74. [This explains a passage in Jeremiah, where the harvest is mentioned as occurring before summer :—‘ The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved ;’ viii. 20.]—*Editor*.

† Travels, vol. ii. p. 136.

which he then resided, excepting a few fountains, they had only cistern-water ; so that if the divine anger suspended the rains, there was more danger of perishing by thirst than by famine.' Jerome certainly committed a mistake, when he referred the words of Amos to the latter rain ; but he understood as certainly the true extent of the threatening.

The former and the latter rains were, in the days of Elijah, suspended for three years and six months. But when the prophet said to Ahab, 'As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word ;'* he could not mean, there shall be no rain at all for three years ; for, long before their termination, the whole population of Israel must have miserably perished. It is not uncommon among the orientals, to express a great deficiency by an absolute negative. Thus, Philo affirms that in Egypt they have no winter ; by which, according to his own explanation, he meant no hail, no thunder, no violent storms of wind, which constitute an eastern winter. Pliny, in like manner, affirms there are no rains, no thunders, no earthquakes in that country ; while Maillet, who quotes him, asserts that he had seen it rain there several times, and that there were two earthquakes in Egypt during his residence.† His idea, therefore, is very plausible, that Pliny meant only to state the rare occurrence of these phenomena ; that it seldom feels the power of the earthquake, and when it does, suffers but little damage ; that it very seldom rains or thunders, although on the sea coast the rains and thunders are often very violent ; but it does not rain there as in other parts of the world. This account of the rain of Egypt is confirmed by the testimony of two English travellers. When Pitts was at Cairo, the rain descended in torrents, and the streets having no kennels to carry off the water, it reached above the ankles, and

* 1 Kings xvii. 1.

† Maillet, *Let. i. p. 12.*

in some places much higher.* In Upper Egypt, it rained and hailed almost a whole morning, when Dr Pococke was there in the month of February; and the following night it also rained very hard. These authentic statements unfold the true meaning of the prophet's assertion, that 'Egypt has no rain;'† he must be understood in the same qualified sense as Pliny and other writers. In the same manner, the words of Elijah to Ahab must be interpreted; they only mean, that the dew and the rain should not fall in the usual and necessary quantities. Such a suspension of rain and dew was sufficient to answer the corrective purposes of God, whilst an absolute drought of three year's continuance, must have converted the whole country into an uninhabitable waste. But such a destruction is not intimated in the Scriptures; and, we may conclude from the inspired narrative, did not take place. That guilty people were certainly reduced in the righteous judgments of God to great straits: but still they were able to subsist until his fierce anger passed away, and mercy returned to bless their afflicted habitations.

The want of rain in the East is partly compensated by the copious dews which fall in the night, to restore and refresh the face of nature. The sacred writers were too much alive to the beauties of nature, too keen and accurate observers of the works and operations of their God, not to avail themselves of this part of the divine arrangements to give us a visible and lively conception of the purity and influence of his blessing. In the sublime benediction which the dying patriarch pronounced on the future inheritance of Joseph, the dew occupies a prominent place, clearly indicating its incalculable value in the mind of an oriental:—'And of Joseph he said, blessed of the Lord be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath.'‡ When the holy Psal-

* Pitts, p. 95.

† Zech. xiv. 18.

‡ Deut. xxxiii. 13.

mist, many ages afterwards, poured out the sorrows of his heart over the fallen house of Saul, he deprived the spot where the king and his sons fell of the dew, the rain and the fields of offerings, as the greatest curse which his lacerated feelings could devise :—‘ Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain upon you, nor fields of offerings ; for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away.’* So silent, irresistible, and swift, is the descent of the dew on every field and on every blade of grass, that Hushai, David’s friend, selects it as the most appropriate phenomenon in nature to symbolize the sudden onset of an enemy :—‘ We will light upon him as the dew falleth on the ground.† When the chosen people were scattered among the rivers of Babylon, they resembled a field burnt up by the scorching sun ; but the favour and blessing of heaven are promised to restore them to the high estate from which they had fallen. ‘ For thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.’‡ Although they were dried and withered as the grass, yet he promises to revive, refresh, and strengthen them by the power of his spirit and the riches of his grace. The dew drops of the morning are not more pure and insinuating, more lovely and ornamental, when they descend on the tender grass, than the doctrines of inspiration on the heart and conduct of a genuine Christian. This idea is beautifully expressed by Moses in his dying song :— ‘ My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass.§ The mutual regard which ought to animate the people of God is compared to the dew which moistens the hill of Hermon and clothes it with verdure.|| The drops of dew are countless and brilliant, glittering over all the field,

* 2 Sam. i. 21.

† Isaiah xxvi. 19.

‡ Psalm cxxxiii. 3.

† 2 Sam. xvii. 12.

§ Deut. xxxii. 2.

cheering the heart of the husbandman, and stimulating his exertions; not less abundant, illustrious, and encouraging, were the first converts to the christian faith, after the ascension of Christ. That splendid manifestation of Almighty grace was celebrated many ages before in the songs of Zion:—‘Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.’* But it too frequently happens that the glory of the church, as well as the attainments of her children, suffers a mournful decline, and passes rapidly away: and what emblem, more appropriate, can be chosen to indicate such a change than the sudden evaporation of the dew by the kindling rays of a vertical sun? ‘O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away.’†

These circumstances have attracted the attention of almost every traveller who has visited those parts of the world. When Maundrell was in the neighbourhood of mount Hermon, he remarked, ‘We were instructed by experience, what the Psalmist means by the dew of Hermon, our tents being as wet with it as if it had rained all night.’‡ In Arabia, says Dr Shaw, the dew often wets the traveller who has no covering but the heavens, to the skin; but no sooner is the sun risen and the atmosphere a little heated, than the mists are quickly dispersed, and the copious moisture, which the dews communicated to the sands, would be entirely evaporated.§

A shower of rain in the East is often preceded by a whirlwind, which darkens the sky with immense clouds of sand from the loose surface of the desert. To this common phenomenon the prophet alludes in his direction to the king of Israel, who was marching with his

* Psalm cx. 3.

† Journey, p. 77.

‡ Hosea vi. 4.

§ Travels, vol. ii. p. 323.

army against Moab, and was ready to perish in the wilderness for want of water:—‘ Thus saith the Lord, make this valley full of ditches. For thus saith the Lord, ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water that ye may drink, both ye and your cattle and your beasts.’* If a squall had not commonly preceded rain, the prophet would not have said, ‘ ye shall not see wind.’ The intimate relation between a gale of wind and a shower of rain, in the oriental regions, is confirmed by the following proverb:—‘ Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift (or pretends he will bestow a valuable gift, and disappoints the expectation of his neighbour), is like clouds and winds without rain.’†

The sacred historian, in one passage, speaks of the heavens being darkened with wind;‡ but as this can be produced only two ways, either by collecting the clouds, or by raising immense quantities of sand into the higher regions of the air, and as the clouds are mentioned in the same clause, he must, it is presumed, allude to the latter phenomenon. The rising of a whirlwind before a shower, and the elevation of the sand, are not confined to the desert, they are common occurrences in the inhabited regions of Syria.

The whirlwind, it appears from the sacred writings, comes from different points of the compass. The prophet Ezekiel speaks of one that came from the north; and although it appeared to him in vision, it was according to the course of nature; for we learn, from other sources of information, that it sometimes arises in that quarter. William of Tyre records an instance of a violent whirlwind from the north, in the time of the crusades, which enveloped two hostile armies in an immense cloud of dust, and compelled them for a while to suspend the work of destruction.§ When that enterprising traveller, Mr Parke, was traversing the

* 2 Kings iii. 16, 17.

† 1 Kings xviii. 45.

‡ Prov. xxv. 14.

§ Harmer's Obser. vol. i. p. 94.

Sahara, or great desert, in his way to the Niger, destitute of provisions and water, his throat pained with thirst, and his strength nearly exhausted, he heard a wind sounding from the east, and instinctively opened his parched mouth to receive the precious drops of rain which he confidently expected, but it was instantly filled with sand drifted from the desert. So immense was the quantity raised into the air, and wafted upon the wings of the wind, and so great the velocity with which it flew, that he was compelled to turn his face to the west to prevent suffocation, and continue motionless till it passed.* In Persia, violent currents of air are sometimes seen impelling the clouds in different directions, whose concussion produces an awful noise, like the rushing of a great body of water. As the cloud approaches the earth, the sound becomes still more alarming: for nothing, says Mr Morier, can be more awful.† To this natural phenomenon, the strife of the four winds in the vision of Daniel is perhaps allusive: —‘I saw in my vision by night, and behold the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea.’‡

Whirlwinds occasionally sweep along the country in an extremely frightful manner, carrying away in their vortex, sand, branches, and stubble, and raising them to an immense height in the air. Very striking is the allusion which the prophet makes to this phenomenon: —‘He shall also blow upon them, and they shall

* Trav. p. 178: see also Arrian's Hist. of Alexander's Expedition, chap. 3. The sands of the African desert, wafted by the south wind in immense quantities, overwhelms the whole country, covers all the marks of former paths, and leaves the traveller as much at a loss how to shape his course as if he were at sea. When Thevenot was on his way from Egypt to Arabia, he was overtaken by a strong gale of wind, which raised such immense clouds of sand, that the caravan was almost buried in it. Nobody could stay abroad without having his mouth and eyes immediately filled with it; and even in the tent where they took shelter, the wind drove in the sand above a foot deep around them; and so subtle was the sand, that it penetrated into all their packages and spoiled their victuals, though carefully wrapped up.—Trav. part i. p. 162.

† Morier's Trav. in Persia, vol. ii. p. 310.

‡ Daniel vii. 2.

wither, and the whirlwind shall take them away as stubble.* With equal force and beauty the Psalmist refers to the rotatory action of the whirlwind, which frequently impels a bit of straw over the waste, like a wheel set in rapid motion :—‘ O my God, make them like a wheel, as the stubble before the wind.’†

Sometimes it comes from no particular point, but moves about in every direction. Mr Bruce, in his journey through the desert of Senaar, had the singular felicity to contemplate this wonderful phenomenon in all its terrific majesty, without injury, although with considerable danger and alarm. In that vast expanse of desert, from west and to north-west of him, he saw a number of prodigious pillars of sand at different distances, moving at times with great celerity, at others stalking on with majestic slowness; at intervals he thought they were coming in a very few minutes to overwhelm him and his companions. Again they would retreat so as to be almost out of sight, their tops reaching to the very clouds. There the tops often separated from the bodies; and these, once disjointed, dispersed in the air, and appeared no more. Sometimes they were broken near the middle, as if struck with a large cannon shot. About noon they began to advance with considerable swiftness upon them, the wind being very strong at north. Eleven of these awful visitors ranged along side of them about the distance of three miles. The greatest diameter of the largest appeared to him at that distance, as if it would measure ten feet. They retired from them with a wind at south-east, leaving an impression upon the mind of our intrepid traveller to which he could give no name, though he candidly admits that one ingredient in it was fear, with a considerable deal of wonder and astonishment. He declares it was in vain to think of flying, the swiftest horse, or fastest sailing ship, could be of no use to carry

* Isaiah xl. 24.

† Psalm lxxxiii. 13; Morier's Trav. vol. ii. p. 302.

them out of this danger; and the full persuasion of this rivetted him to the spot where he stood. Next day they were gratified with a similar display of moving pillars, in form and disposition like those already described, only they seemed to be more in number and less in size. They came several times in a direction close upon them; that is, according to Mr Bruce's computation, within less than two miles. They became, immediately after sun-rise, like a thick wood, and almost darkened the sun; his rays shining through them for near an hour, gave them an appearance of pillars of fire. At another time they were terrified by an army (as it seemed) of these sand pillars, whose march was constantly south; a number of which seemed once to be coming directly upon them; and though they were little nearer than two miles, a considerable quantity of sand fell around them. On the twenty-first of November, about eight in the morning, he had a view of the desert to the westward as before, and saw the sands had already begun to rise in immense twisted pillars, which darkened the heavens, and moved over the desert with more magnificence than ever. The sun shining through the pillars, which were thicker, and contained more sand apparently than any of the preceding days, seemed to give those nearest them an appearance as if spotted with stars of gold. A little before twelve, the wind at north ceased, and a considerable quantity of fine sand rained upon them for an hour afterwards.* To this species of rain, Moses was no stranger; he had seen it and felt its effects in the sandy deserts of Arabia, and he places it among the curses that were, in future ages, to punish the rebellion of his people:—'The Lord shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust: from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed.'†

But this fatal wind more frequently comes from the south, and is then attended with infinitely greater dan-

* Trav. vol. vi. p. 461.

† Deut. xxviii. 24.

ger to the hapless traveller, whom it overtakes in the Nubian wilds.* According to Savary, the south wind which blows in Egypt from February to May, fills the atmosphere with a subtle dust, which impedes respiration, and brings with it pernicious vapours. Sometimes it appears only in the shape of an impetuous whirlwind, which passes rapidly, and is fatal to the traveller, surprised in the middle of the deserts. Torrents of burning sand roll before it, the firmament is enveloped in a thick veil, and the sun appears of the colour of blood.† It is therefore with strict propriety, that the sacred writers distinguish from all others the whirlwinds of the south, and with peculiar force and beauty, compare the sudden approach of calamity, to their impetuous and destructive career :—‘ I also will laugh at your calamities ; I will mock when your fear cometh : when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind : when distress and anguish cometh upon you.’‡ Whole caravans have been overwhelmed in a moment, by the immense quantity of sand which it puts in motion. The Arab who conducted Mr Bruce through the frightful deserts of Senaar, pointed out to him a spot among some sandy hillocks, where the ground seemed to be more elevated than the rest, where one of the largest caravans which ever came out of Egypt was covered with sand to the number of several thousand camels. This awful phenomenon, Addison has well described in the following lines, which he puts into the mouth of Syphax, a Numidian prince :—

‘ So where our wide Numidian states extend,
Sudden the impetuous hurricanes descend,
Wheel through the air, in circling eddies play,
Tear up the sands, and sweep whole plains away.
The helpless traveller, with wild surprise,
Sees the dry desert all around him rise,
And, smothered in the dusty whirlwind, dies.’

* Maillet, Let. xiv. p. 232.

† Savary's Letters on Egypt ; Maillet, Let. dern. p. 218.

‡ Prov. i. 26, 27.

The south wind in those arid regions, blowing over an immense surface of burning sand, becomes so charged with electrical matter, as to occasion the greatest danger, and often instant death to the unwary traveller. A Turk, who had twice performed the pilgrimage to Mecca, told Dr Clarke that he had witnessed more than once the direful effects of this hot pestilential wind in the desert. He has known all the water dried out of their skin bottles in an instant by its influence. The camels alone gave notice of its approach, by making a noise, and burying their mouths and nostrils in the sand. This was considered an infallible token that the desolation was at hand; and those who imitated the camels escaped suffocation.*

In some districts it commits great ravages, and at times so totally burns up all the corn that no animal will eat a blade of it or touch any of its grain. It has been known even in Persia to destroy camels and other hardy animals; its effects on the human frame are represented as inconceivably dreadful. In some instances it kills instantaneously; but in others the wretched sufferer lingers for hours and even days, in the most excruciating torture. In those places where it is not fatal to life, it resembles the breath of a glowing furnace, destroys every symptom of vegetation, and will, even during the night, scorch the skin in the most painful manner. In the sandy desert it is often so heated as to destroy every thing, animal and vegetable, with which it comes in contact. In the inhabited country every article of furniture, of glass, and even of wood, becomes as hot as if it were exposed to a raging fire.† In Hindostan, when the hot wind blows, the atmosphere for many hours of the day becomes insupportable; the heavens are like brass, and the earth like heated iron. At such times the miserable inhabitants

* Harm. vol. i. p. 95, note by Dr Clarke: see also Volney's Trav. vol. i. p. 41-43.

† Morier's Trav. vol. ii. pp. 43, 220, 223, 224.

are obliged to confine themselves in dark rooms cooled by screens of matted grass kept continually watered.* To this terrible agent the prophet alludes in his prediction of Sennacherib's overthrow :—' Behold, I will send a blast upon him.'† The return of man to his native dust is as certain and speedy as the blasting of a tender plant by the deadly breath of the Simoom :—' For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.'‡

The account which Mr Bruce gives in his Travels, of this wind, and of its effects, are too remarkable to be omitted. On the sixteenth of November, at eleven o'clock before noon, Idris the native guide cried out with a loud voice, Fall on your faces, for here is the Simoom ! The traveller upon this turned round, and saw from the south-east a haze come, in colour like the purple part of the rainbow, but not so compressed. It did not occupy twenty yards in breadth, and was about twelve feet high from the ground. It was a kind of blush upon the air, and moved with great rapidity ; for he scarcely could turn to fall upon the ground with his head to the northward, when he felt the heat of its current plainly upon his face. The light air which blew for some time after the meteor or purple haze had passed, was of a heat to threaten suffocation.

On the twentieth of the same month, they had another visit from this terrible adversary. The coloured haze on this occasion seemed to be rather less compressed, and to have with it a shade of blue. The edges of it were not defined as those of the former, but like a very thin smoke, with about a yard in the middle tinged with those colours. They all fell upon their faces, and the Simoom passed with a gentle ruffling wind. It continued to blow in this manner till near three o'clock; so they were all taken ill that night, and

* Forbes' Orient. Memoirs, vol. iii. p. 126.

† 2 Kings xix. 7.

‡ Psalm ciii. 16.

had hardly strength left them to load the camels and arrange the baggage.

The effects of a third visit were still more injurious : it produced a desperate kind of indifference about life ; it brought upon him a degree of cowardice and languor, with which he struggled in vain ; and it completely exhausted his strength.*

Campbell, in his *Travels*, most significantly calls it a horrid wind, whose consuming blasts extend their ravages all the way from the extreme end of the gulf of Cambaya up to Mosul. It carries along with it fleaks of fire, like threads of silk ; instantly strikes dead those that breathe it, and consumes them inwardly to ashes ; the flesh soon becoming black as a coal, and dropping off the bones. The numbers that perish by its fatal influence, are sometimes very great.† Thevenot states, that in the year 1665, in the month of July, four thousand people died at Bassora by that wind, in three weeks time.

By this powerful and terrific agent, invigorated by the arm, and guided by the finger of Jehovah, was the numerous army of the proud and blaspheming Sennacherib destroyed under the walls of Libnah. In the brief statement of Isaiah it is said, ‘ Then the angel (or, as it may be rendered, the messenger) of the Lord, went forth and smote in the camp of the Assyrians, a hundred and fourscore and five thousand men.’‡ Now this angel of Jehovah is expressly called in verse 7th of the same chapter, *Ruach*, a blast or wind ; which can hardly leave a doubt of the manner in which this passage is to be understood.§

The suffocating heats, wafted on the wings of the south wind from the glowing sands of the desert, are felt more or less in all the oriental regions ; and even

* *Travels*, vol. vi. pp. 462, 463.

† *Journey over Land*, p. 81 ; *Maillet's Letters*, p. 218.

‡ *Isaiah xxxvii. 36.*

§ *Dr Clarke, note, p. 96, vol. i. of his edition of Harmer.*

in Italy itself, although far distant from the terrible wastes of the neighbouring continents, where they produce a general languor, and difficulty of respiration. To this pestilential wind our Lord evidently refers in these words :—‘ When ye see the south wind blow, ye say there will be heat ; and it cometh to pass.’*

The south wind, so fatal or injurious to the people of the east, must be to them an object of alarm or dismay ; yet in the Song of Solomon, according to our translation, it is invited by the spouse to come and blow upon her garden, and waft its fragrance to her beloved.† If the south winds in Judea are as oppressive as they are in Barbary and Egypt, and as the winds from the desert are at Aleppo (which, according to Russel,‡ are of the same nature as the south winds in Canaan) ; or, if they are only very hot, as Le Bruin certainly found them in October,§ would the spouse have desired the north wind to depart, as Bochart renders it, and the south wind to blow ? The supposition cannot be admitted. An inspired writer never departs from the strictest truth and propriety in the use of figures according to the rules of oriental composition ; and therefore a meaning directly opposite must be the true one, to correspond with the physical character of that wind. The nature of the prayer also requires a different version ; for is it to be supposed that the spouse, in the same breath would desire two directly opposite winds to blow upon her garden ? It now remains to inquire, if the original text will admit of another version ; and it must be evident, that the only difficulty lies in the term which we render Come thou. Now the verb *Bo*, signifies both to come and to depart ; literally, to remove from one place to another. In this sense of going or departing, it is used in the prophecies of Jonah twice in one verse :—‘ He found a ship (*Baa*) going to Tarshish ; so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into

* Luke xii. 55.

† Russel, vol. i. pp. 66, 67.

‡ Song iv. 16.

§ Tome ii. p. 152.

it (Labo) to go with them.* It occurs again in this sense in the book of Ruth, and is so rendered in our translation :—‘ He went (Vayabo) to lie down at the end of the heap of corn.’ The going down or departure of the sun, is expressed by a derivative of the same verb in the book of Deuteronomy :—‘ Are they not on the other side Jordan, by the way where the sun *goeth down* ?’† Joshua uses it in the same sense :—‘ Unto the great sea (Mebo) toward the going down of the sun, shall be your coast.’‡ The passage then, under consideration, may be rendered in this manner, putting the address to the south wind in a parenthesis : Arise, O north wind (retire thou south), blow upon my garden, let the spices thereof flow forth, that my beloved may come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits.

Those critics who favour the common interpretation contend, that the south wind is warm and humid, and by its gentle heat clothes the face of nature with all its diversified beauties. This is, in particular, the opinion of Sanctius ; but, recollecting that Virgil speaks of the south wind as destructive to flowers, he anticipates the objection by gravely asserting, that the south wind may be destructive in Italy, and stormy in Africa, yet placid and salubrious in Palestine, because it blows from the sea, from which it acquires a humid warmth and softness. Winds blowing from the same points in different countries, may perhaps assume different characters, and produce different and even contrary effects ; but the opinion of Sanctius is entirely groundless. The south wind in Palestine can scarcely be said to blow from the sea ; it only crosses the Red Sea in its way from the vast deserts of Africa ; after which it traverses the burning sands of Arabia before it reaches the land of Canaan ; and, consequently, it comes on that country strongly charged with electrical matter, and glowing like the heat of a large oven, the effects of which are so violent, that the inhabitants find it necessary to

* Jonah i. 3.

† Deut. xi. 30.

‡ Joshua i. 4.

shut fast the doors and windows of their apartments.* Such an incommoding or injurious wind is surely not a natural object of desire. Even in Italy, where it blows directly across the Mediterranean, it is deleterious, as we know from the authentic testimony of Virgil :—

‘ ——— namque urget ab alto
Arboribusque satisque Notus pecorique sinister.’

Geor. b. i. l. 44.

But if it be so hurtful to vegetable and animal existence in the distant fields of Italy, it must be greatly more injurious in Palestine, which borders on the deserts, the native land of the purple haze. This conclusion, were any confirmation necessary to establish so plain a truth, is verified by the testimony of Le Bruin, already quoted, who, in the course of his travels in Palestine, found from experience, that it produced an oppressive heat, not the gentle and inviting warmth which Sanctius supposed. No traveller,† so far as the writer has been able to discover, gives a favourable account of the south wind ; consequently, it cannot be an object of desire ; the view, therefore, which Harmer first gave of this text, is in every respect entitled to the preference :—‘ Awake, O north wind (depart thou south), blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out.’

In Syria, lightnings are frequent in the autumnal months. Seldom a night passes without a great deal

* See Dr Shaw's Trav. vol. i. p. 246 ; Maillet, Let. ii. p. 110. Thevenot's Trav. b. i. c. 10, p. 2 ; Volney's Trav. vol. i. c. 4.

† Mr Maurice may perhaps be mentioned as an exception. ‘ The two particular winds that most affected Egypt, were the northerly Etesian wind and the southern. The former springing up about the summer solstice, drove before it that vast body of aggregated vapours, which, discharging themselves in torrents of rain upon the mountains of Ethiopia, caused the waters of the Nile to rise. That propitious wind, on the contrary, which, rising after the inundation, blew from the south,—contributed its powerful aid towards the draining off of those waters.’—*Indian Antiq.* vol. iv. pp. 235, 236. But this is, perhaps, the only favour which the south wind bestows even on the vale of Egypt ; in the Holy Land it never sheds a single blessing from its burning wings.

of lightning in the north-west, but without thunder ; but when it appears in the west or south-west points, it is a sure sign of approaching rain, and is often attended with thunder.* It has been observed already, that a squall of wind and clouds of dust are the usual forerunners of the first rains. To these natural phenomena, the sacred writers frequently allude ; and in the precise order which has been marked in the preceding observations. The royal Psalmist, in a very beautiful strain, ascribes them to the immediate agency of heaven :—‘ He causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth ; he maketh lightnings for the rain ; he bringeth the wind out of his treasures.’† The cisterns of the clouds are replenished by exhalations from every part of the globe ; and when they are ready to open and pour out their refreshing showers on the parched ground, the glad tidings are announced by the rapid lightning, and the precious treasure is scattered over the field by the attendant winds ; and that the sweet singer of Israel looked through nature with an accurate discriminating eye, is confirmed by the concurring testimony of all ages. In the following passage, the prophet Jeremiah seems to have borrowed the very words of the Psalmist :—‘ When he uttereth his voice, there is a multitude of waters in the heavens, and he causeth the vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth ; he maketh lightnings with rain, and bringeth forth the wind out of his treasures.’‡ Here, by a sublime metaphor, is thunder denominated the voice of God, and the harbinger of the rain ; and the pious seer recognizes in the glare of the lightnings, the rolling of the thunder, and the effusion of the showers of heaven by which they are followed, the immediate agency of Him who made the earth by his power, who has established the world by his wisdom, and has stretched out the heavens by his discretion. These

* Russel's Hist. vol. ii. p. 285.

† Psalm cxxxv. 7.

‡ Jeremiah x. 13.

lightnings, thunders, and rains, he justly calls the treasures of Jehovah ; things precious and rare in those parts of the earth, which the beneficent Creator has laid up, under his own management, for the preservation and comfort of man and beast. So deeply did the prophets feel the value of the autumnal rains, which the God whom they served shed upon the dry and thirsty ground after the drought of summer ; with so much beauty and correctness did they describe the various phenomena of the revolving seasons ; and how much greater energy appears in their descriptions, after we have gained an acquaintance with the state of the weather in that part of the world ! *

Before taking leave of this subject, it may not be improper to remark the wisdom and goodness of God displayed in the temperature of an oriental sky. The excessive heats of the day, which are sometimes incommodious even in the depth of winter, are compensated and rendered consistent with animal and vegetable life, by a corresponding degree of coolness in the night. The patriarch Jacob takes notice of this fact in his expostulation with Laban :—‘ By day the heat consumed me, and the frost by night.’ Mr Bruce, in like manner, frequently remarks in his journey through the deserts of Senaar, where the heat of the day was almost insupportable, that the coldness of the night was

* The most energetic, the most just and beautiful descriptions of uninspired bards, make but a distant approach to the sublime dictates of inspiration. With the passages quoted from the Psalmist and the Prophet, let the following lines of Virgil, the prince of Roman poets, be compared, and the difference will immediately appear :—

‘ Atque hæc ut certis possimus discere signis,
Aestusque, pluviasque et agentes frigora ventos,’ &c.

Geor. b. i. l. 351.

‘ And that we may learn these things by certain signs, both heats and rains, and cold bringing winds, Father *Jove* himself has appointed what the monthly moon should betoken ; with what signs the south winds should fall ; from what common observations the husbandman should learn to keep his herds nearer their stalls.’

very great.* When Rauwolf travelled on the Euphrates, he was wont to wrap himself up in a frieze coat in the night time, to defend himself from the frost and dew, which, he observes, are very frequent and violent there.† Thevenot traversed the very fields where Jacob tended the flocks of Laban; and he found the heats of the day so intense, that although he wore upon his head a large black handkerchief after the manner of the orientals when they travel, yet his forehead was frequently so scorched, as to swell exceedingly, and actually to suffer excoriation; his hands, being more exposed to the burning sun, were continually parched; and he learned from experience, to sympathize with the toil-worn shepherd of the East.‡ In Europe the days and nights resemble each other with respect to the qualities of heat and cold; but if credit be due to the representations of Chardin, it is quite otherwise in oriental climates. In the Lower Asia, particularly, the day is always hot, and as soon as the sun is fifteen degrees above the horizon, no cold is felt in the depth of winter itself: on the contrary, the nights are as cold as at Paris in the month of March. It is for this reason that in Turkey and Persia they always used furred habits in the country, such only being sufficient to resist the cold of the night. Chardin travelled in Arabia and Mesopotamia, the scene of Jacob's adventures, both in winter and in summer, and attested on his return, the truth of what the patriarch asserted, that he was scorched with heat in the day, and stiffened with cold in the night. This difference in the state of the air in twenty-four hours, is in some places extremely great, and according to that respectable traveller, not conceivable by those who have not seen it; one would imagine, they had passed in a moment from the violent heats of summer

* Travels, vol. iv. p. 596, 4to edition.

† Ray's Collection of Travels, pp. 155, 156.

‡ Part ii. p. 52.

to the depth of winter. Thus it has pleased a beneficent Deity to temper the heat of the day by the coolness of the night, without which the greatest part of the East would be a parched and sterile desert, equally destitute of vegetable and animal life. This account is confirmed by a modern traveller. When Campbell was passing through Mesopotamia, he sometimes lay at night in the open fields, rather than enter a town; on which occasions, he says, 'I found the weather as piercingly cold as it was distressingly hot in the day time.'* The same difference between the days and nights has been observed on the Syrian bank of the Euphrates; the mornings are cold, and the days intensely hot.† This difference is distinctly marked in these words of the prophet:—'Therefore, thus saith the Lord of Jehoiakim, king of Judah; he shall have none to sit upon the throne of David; and his dead body shall be cast out in the day to the heat, and in the night to the frost.'‡ So just and accurate are the numerous allusions of Scripture to the natural state of the oriental regions; and so necessary it is to study with care the natural history of those celebrated and interesting countries, to enable us to ascertain with clearness and precision the meaning, or to discern the beauty and force, of numerous passages of the sacred volume.

[Notwithstanding the general salubrity of the atmosphere in Palestine, this country was anciently, as well as in modern times, liable to be visited by the plague, which, as it still does, made its silent and insidious approaches from Egypt and the adjacent countries, and which is often alluded to by the sacred writers, and particularly the Psalmist.§

[Palestine was also frequently subject to earthquakes, as might have been expected from its physical character and situation; and it is a remarkable cir-

* Journey over Land, p. 101.

† Harm. vol. i. p. 114.

‡ Jeremiah xxxvi. 30.

§ Psalm xl. 6, where a horrible tempest is in the margin better rendered 'a burning tempest,' i. e. the plague.

cumstance, that although all other parts of the land seem to have been occasionally the scene of those terrible convulsions, the capital was almost wholly free from them.* It was not merely the shaking of the ground that gave to these occurrences their alarming character, but they were frequently attended with land slips,—large tracts of ground, especially such as lay on declivities, on which a large portion of the land of Palestine was situated, being suddenly swept away with all they contained. To such tremblings and removals of the earth the Scriptures contain frequent striking allusions.†

[Volcanoes, too, were among the other phenomena of nature which an angry Providence sometimes employed to bring the inconstant people of this land to faith and duty. It has been already mentioned that on the bed of the Dead Sea, and along the plain of the Jordan northwards, there are traces of volcanic action. An extinct crater has been lately discovered not far from Tiberias, and still farther north we are informed by an intelligent and most observant traveller, that from the bridge of Jacob to Jana, on the road to Damascus, the whole way is composed of nothing but lava, basaltes, and other volcanic productions ;—all is black, porous, or carious. These are evident signs, he adds, that all this country was formerly filled with volcanoes, for we beheld several small craters in traversing the plain.‡ The inspired writers unquestionably had these subterranean furnaces of fire in view when they employed the striking images contained in the passages quoted below.§]

General Fertility of Palestine.—The soil, both of the maritime and inland parts of Syria and Phœnicia, is of a light loamy nature, and easily cultivated. Syria may be considered as a country consisting of three long strips of land, exhibiting different qua-

* Psalm xlv. 2-5.

† Psalm cxiv. 6 ; Isaiah xxiv. 1.

‡ Travels of Ali Bey, vol. iii. p. 263.

§ Isaiah lxiv. 1-3 ; Jeremiah li. 25 ; Micah i. 3 ; Nahum i. 5.

lities: one extending along the Mediterranean, forming a warm humid valley, the salubrity of which is doubtful, but which is extremely fertile; the other, which forms its frontier, is a hilly rugged soil, but more salubrious: the third, lying beyond the eastern hills, combines the drought of the latter with the heat of the former. We have seen by what a happy combination of climate and soil this province unites in a small compass the advantages and productions of different zones, insomuch that the God of nature seems to have designed it for one of the most agreeable habitations of this continent. The soil is a fine mould, without stones, and almost without even the smallest pebble. Volney himself, who furnishes the particulars of this statement, is compelled to admit, that what is said of its actual fertility, exactly corresponds with the idea given of it in the Hebrew scriptures.* Wherever wheat is sown, if the rains do not fail, it repays the cultivator with profusion, and grows to the height of a man. The mount of Olives near Jerusalem, and several other districts in Judea and Galilee, are covered with olive plantations, whose fruit is equal to any produced in the Levant. The fig trees in the neighbourhood of Joppa are equally beautiful and productive as the olive.† Were the Holy Land as well inhabited and cultivated as formerly, Dr Shaw declares it would still be more fruitful than the very best part of Syria or Phœnicia; for the soil itself is generally much richer, and all things considered, yields a preferable crop.‡ Thus, the cotton, which is

* Volney's Travels, vol. i. p. 215, and vol. ii. pp. 190, 213, *et seq.* [The language of other writers is to the same purport:—'How some authors have described this goodly land,' says Wilde, 'as so unfruitful, as to warrant the assertions of Voltaire, that he would not receive a present of it from the sultan, I know not, as the appearance of the plain of Sharon alone would refute so gross a misstatement.']
—Editor.

† Hasselquist's Travels, p. 117-119.

‡ Shaw's Travels, vol. ii. p. 139, *et seq.*

gathered in the plains of Rama, Esdraelon, and Zebulun, is in greater esteem, according to that excellent writer, than what is cultivated near Sidon and Tripoli; neither is it possible for pulse, wheat, or grain of any kind, to be richer or better tasted than what is commonly sold at Jerusalem. The barrenness, or scarcity rather, of which some authors may either ignorantly or maliciously complain, does not proceed, in the opinion of Dr Shaw, from the incapacity or natural unfruitfulness of the country, but from the want of inhabitants, and from the great aversion to labour and industry in those few by whom it is possessed. The perpetual discords and depredations among the petty princes who share this fine country, greatly obstruct the operations of the husbandman, who must have small encouragement to sow, when it is quite uncertain who shall gather in the harvest. It is in other respects a fertile country, and still capable of affording to its neighbours the like ample supplies of corn and oil, which it is known to have done in the time of Solomon, who gave yearly to Hiram twenty thousand measures of wheat for food to his household, and twenty measures of pure oil.*

The parts about Jerusalem particularly, being rocky and mountainous, have been supposed to be barren and unfruitful; yet, granting this conclusion, which is, however, far from being just, a country is not to be characterized from one single district of it, but from the whole. And besides, the blessing which was given to Judah, was not of the same kind with the blessing of Asher or of Issachar, that 'his bread should be fat or his land pleasant,' but that 'his eyes should be red with wine, and his teeth should be white with milk.'† [Joliffe tells us that he was particularly struck, in passing through the ancient territories of Judah, with the extremely white teeth of the shepherds, aris-

* See also Dr Clarke's Trav. vol. iii. part 2, chap. 16.

† Gen. xlix. 12.

ing from their diet consisting almost wholly of preparations of milk, without animal food.] In the estimation of the Jewish lawgiver, milk and honey (the chief dainties and subsistence of the earlier ages, as they still continue to be of the Bedouin Arabs), are the glory of all lands; these productions are either actually enjoyed in the lot of Judah, or, at least, might be obtained by proper care and application. The abundance of wine alone, is wanting at present; yet the acknowledged goodness of that little, which is still made at Jerusalem and Hebron, clearly proves, that these barren rocks as they are called, would yield a much greater quantity, if the abstemious Turk and Arab would permit the vine to be further propagated and improved.

Wild honey, which formed a part of the food of John the Baptist in the wilderness, may indicate to us the great plenty of it in those deserts; and that consequently, taking the hint from nature, and enticing the bees into hives and larger colonies, it might be produced in much greater quantity.* The great abundance of wild honey is often mentioned in Scripture; a memorable instance of which occurs in the first book of Samuel:—‘And all they of the land came to a wood, and there was honey upon the ground; and when the people were come to the wood, behold the honey dropped.’† This circumstance perfectly accords with the view which Moses gave of the promised land, in the song with which he closed his long and eventful career:—‘He made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock.’‡ That good land preserved its character in the time of David, who thus celebrates the distinguishing bounty of God to his chosen people:—‘He would have fed them also with the finest of the wheat, and with honey out of the rock would I have satisfied thee.’§ In these holy strains, the sacred poet

* Josephus, accordingly calls Jericho *μελιττοτροφον χωραν*, the honey-bearing country.

† 1 Sam. xiv. 25, 26. ‡ Deut. xxxii. 13. § Psalm lxxxi. 16.

availed himself of the most valuable products of Canaan, to lead the faith and hope of his nation to bounties of a higher order, of greater price, and more urgent necessity, than any which the soil even of that favoured region, stimulated and sustained as it certainly was by the special blessing of heaven, produced,—the bounties of sovereign and redeeming mercy, purchased with the blood, and imparted by the spirit, of the Son of God.*

As the mountains of Palestine abound in some places with thyme, rosemary, sage, and other aromatic plants, in which the bee chiefly delights; so, in other places, they are covered with shrubs and a delicate short grass, which is more grateful to the cattle, than that which the fallow-grounds, or the meadows produce. The grazing and feeding of cattle is not peculiar to Judea, it is still practised all over mount Libanus, the Castravan mountains, and Barbary, where the higher grounds are appropriated to this purpose, while the plains and valleys are reserved for tillage.

But even laying aside the profits which might arise from grazing, by the sale of butter, milk, wool, and the great number of cattle which were to be daily disposed of, particularly at Jerusalem, for common food and for the service of the temple; these mountainous tracts would be highly valuable on another account, especially if they were planted with olive trees, one acre of which is of more value, than twice the extent of arable ground. It may be presumed, in like manner, that the vine was not neglected in a soil and exposure so well adapted to its cultivation.

Few traces are now to be found, except at Jerusalem and Hebron, of those extensive vineyards, which in better times adorned the hills of Canaan, and so amply rewarded the labours of the cultivator; but this is owing not to the ungratefulness of the soil, but to the sloth and bigotry of its present possessors. The vine is not of so durable a nature as the olive, and requires,

* Shaw's Trav. vol. ii. pp. 140, 141; Maillet, Let. ix. pp. 24, 25.

besides, an unceasing culture and attention; while the superstitious Turk scruples to encourage the propagation of a plant, whose fruit may be applied to uses forbidden by the rules of his religion. But the general benefit arising from the olive tree, and its longevity and hardiness, have been the means of continuing down to the present times, clumps of several thousands, to mark out to us the possibility, as they are undoubtedly the remains, of more extensive plantations. Now, if to these productions be joined, several plots of arable ground, which lie scattered all over the valleys and windings of the mountains in the lot of Judah and Benjamin, we shall find, that the inheritance even of these tribes which are supposed to have had the most barren part of the country, fell to them in pleasant places, and that theirs was a goodly heritage.

Besides the great quantity of grapes and raisins, says Dr Shaw in a note,* which are brought daily to the markets of Jerusalem and the neighbouring villages, Hebron alone† sends every year to Egypt, three hundred camel loads of the robb which they call dabash, the same word which is simply rendered honey in the sacred volume; as in the command of the patriarch Jacob to his sons:—‘Carry down the man a present of the best things of the land, a little balm, and a little honey:’ For honey, properly so called, could not be a rarity there, so great as dabash must be from the want of vineyards in Egypt. Several different substances appear to have obtained the name of honey among the ancient Israelites; which may be inferred from this precept:—‘Ye shall burn no leaven, nor any kind of

* Travels, vol. ii. p. 144.

† Dandini, speaking of this northern part of the country, says, ‘It abounds in corn, excellent wines, oil, cotton, honey, wax, wood, and sheep, big and fat as those of Cyprus. It is a very surprising thing to see the bigness of the grape, which is equal to a prune; and I easily comprehended, on seeing them, why the Hebrews pushed forward with so much passion the conquest of the land of promise, after they had seen the grape which the spies of Joshua brought back from the neighbouring countries.’—*Editor*.

honey in any offering.’* Besides the honey of grapes, of bees, and of the palm, the honey of the reed, or sugar, might be of great antiquity.†

The mountainous parts of the Holy Land are so far from being inhospitable, unfruitful, or the refuse of the land of Canaan, that in the division of this country, the mountain of Hebron was granted to Caleb as a particular favour:—‘ Now, therefore, give me this mountain of which the Lord spake in that day.’‡ In the time of Asa, the ‘ hill country of Judah’ mustered five hundred and eighty thousand men of valour;§ an argument beyond dispute, that the land was able to maintain them. Even in the present times, though cultivation and improvement are exceedingly neglected, while the plains and valleys, although as fruitful as ever, lie almost entirely desolate, every little hill is crowded with inhabitants. If this part of the Holy Land was composed, as some object, only of naked rocks and precipices, why is it better peopled than the plains of Esdraelon, Rama, Acre, or Zebulun, which are all of them extremely fertile and delightful? It cannot be urged that the inhabitants live with more safety on the hills and mountains, than on the plains, as there are neither walls nor fortifications to secure their villages and encampments; and except in the

* Leviticus ii. 11.

† Thus, the term *yaar*, which our translators render the honeycomb (Song v. 1), is by some interpreters, taken for a reed, or the *mel arundinis* of the Latins, and the *μελι καλαμινον* of the Greeks. Strabo mentions sugar as a succedaneum for the honey of bees; *ειρηκε δε και περι καλαμων, οτι ποιουσι μελι, μελισσων μη ουσων*.—Lib. xv. p. 476. And Lucan,

‘ Quique bibunt tenera dulces ab arundine succos.’

They drink sweet juices from the tender reed. We learn from the *Institutes of Menu*, a work written, according to Sir William Jones, about twelve centuries before the christian era, that sugar, and an ardent spirit resembling rum, drawn from molasses, were common articles of internal commerce in India, at that remote period.—*Institutes of Menu*, p. 320.

‡ Joshua xiv. 12.

§ 2 Chronicles xiv. 8.

range of Lebanon, and some other mountains, few or no places of difficult access; so that both of them are equally exposed to the insults of an enemy. But the reason is obvious, they find among these mountainous rocks and precipices sufficient conveniences for themselves, and much greater for their cattle. Here they have bread to the full, while their flocks and their herds browse upon richer herbage, and both man and beast quench their thirst from springs of excellent water, which is but too much wanted, especially in the summer season, through all the plains of Syria. This fertility of Canaan is fully confirmed by writers of great reputation, whose impartiality cannot be justly suspected. Tacitus calls it a fruitful soil, *uber solum*;* and Justin affirms, that in this country the purity of the air, and the fertility of the soil are equally admirable:—‘Sed non minor loci ejus apricitatis quam ubertatis admiratio est.’†

The justice of these brief accounts, Dr Shaw, and almost every modern traveller, fully verifies. When he travelled in Syria and Phœnicia, in December and January, the whole country, he remarks, looked verdant and cheerful: and the woods particularly, which are chiefly planted with the gall-bearing oak, were every where bestrewed with a variety of anemonies, ranunculusses, colchicas, and mandrakes. Several pieces of ground near Tripoli were full of liquorice; and at the mouth of a famous grotto he saw an elegant species of the blue lily, the same with Morison’s *lilium Persicum florens*. In the beginning of March the plains, particularly between Jaffa and Rama, were every where planted with a beautiful variety of fritillaries, tulips of innumerable hues, and a profusion of the rarest and most beautiful flowers; while the hills and the mountains were covered with yellow pollium, and some varieties of thyme, sage, and rosemary.‡

* Lib. v. c. 6.

† Hist. b. 36, ch. 3.

‡ Shaw’s Travels, vol. ii. pp. 146, 147.

The account which has been now given of the soil and productions of Canaan, will enable the reader to perceive with greater clearness the force and justice of the promise made by Moses to his nation, a little before he died:—‘The Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land; a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths, that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates, a land of oil olive and honey.’*

If to the natural fertility of this highly favoured country be added, the manner in which it was divided among the tribes of Israel, it will furnish an easy and satisfactory answer to the question which the infidel has often put:—‘How could so small a country as Canaan maintain so immense a population, as we find in the writings of the Old Testament?’ That rich and fertile region was divided into small inheritances, on which the respective proprietors lived and reared their families. Necessity, not less than a spirit of industry, required that no part of the surface capable of cultivation should be suffered to lie waste. The husbandman carried his improvements up the sides of the steepest and most rugged mountains to the very top; he converted every patch of earth into a vineyard, or olive plantation; he covered the bare rocks with soil, and thus turned them into fruitful fields; where the steep was too great to admit of an inclined plane, he cut away the face of the precipice, and built walls around the mountain to support the earth, and planted his terraces with the vine and the olive. These circles of

* Deuteronomy viii. 7, 8. [There was a special promise of wheat made to the Israelites in the event of their faithful adherence to the God of their fathers (Psalm lxxxi. 16; cxlvii. 14), and the wheat as well as the barley of Palestine was so exceedingly abundant as to produce sixty, and often a hundred fold (Genesis xxvi. 12; Matthew xiii. 8.) Minnith and Pannag, in particular, were famous for wheat, which they regularly exported to the market of Tyre. So late as the time of Herod Agrippa, the coast of Tyre and Sidon obtained its supplies of corn from Palestine.]—*Editor*.

excellent soil were seen rising gradually from the bottom to the top of the mountains, where the vine and the olive, shading the intermediate rocks with the liveliest verdure, and bending under the load of their valuable produce, amply rewarded the toils of the cultivator. The remains of those hanging gardens, those terrace plantations, after the lapse of so many centuries, the revolutions of empire, and the long decline of industry among the miserable slaves that now occupy that once highly favoured land, may still be distinctly traced on the hills and mountains of Judea.* Every spot of ground was in this manner brought into a state of cultivation; every particle of soil was rendered productive; and by turning a stream of water into every field where it was practicable, and leading the little rills into which they divided it, to every plantation, every tree, and every plant, they secured for the most part a constant succession of crops.†

‘ Thus much is certain,’ says Volney, ‘ and it is the advantage of hot over cold countries, that in the former, wherever there is water, vegetation may be perpetually maintained, and made to produce an uninter-

* Richardson’s Travels, vol. ii. p. 348.

† Dr Clarke describes ‘ the road from Lebanon to Nablous as mountainous, rocky, and full of loose stones, and yet the traces of cultivation are every where marvellous, affording one of the most striking pictures of human industry, that it is possible to behold. The lime-stone rocks and abrupt valleys of Judea are entirely covered with plantations of figs, vines, and olive trees; not a single spot seemed to be neglected. The hills, from their bases to their utmost summits, are overspread with gardens, all of them free from weeds and in the highest state of improvement. Even the sides of the most barren mountains have been rendered fertile by being divided into terraces, like steps rising one above another, upon which soil has been accumulated with astonishing labour. A sight of this territory can alone convey any adequate idea of its surprising produce; it is truly the Eden of the East, rejoicing in the abundance of its wealth. Under a wise and beneficent government, the produce of the Holy Land, it is asserted, would exceed all calculation. Its perennial harvests, the salubrity of its air, its limpid springs, its rivers, lakes, plains, hills, and vales, added to the serenity of its climate, prove this land to be indeed a ‘ field which the Lord hath blessed.’

—Editor.

rupted succession of fruits to flowers, and flowers to fruits. In cold, nay even in temperate climates, on the contrary, nature benumbed for several months, loses in a sterile slumber the third part, or even half the year. The soil which has produced grain, has not time before the decline of summer heat to mature vegetables: a second crop is not to be expected; and the husbandman sees himself condemned to a long and fatal repose. Syria is exempt from these inconveniences; if, therefore, it so happens that its productions are not such as its natural advantages would lead us to expect, *it is less owing to its physical than to its political state.*'*

On this question we have to add the temperament of the people to the physical powers of the country. The Israelite lived upon his own farm, in all the simplicity of rural life; was content with the produce of his own fields; a little wheat in the ear, or in meal, a few grapes and olives, dates or almonds, generally constituted his repast: and the great heat of the climate imperiously required him to lead a frugal and abstemious life. It is well known that the inhabitants of warm countries subsist on much less and much lighter food than the people of colder latitudes, and by consequence are capable of living in more crowded habitations. If all these circumstances are duly considered the countless numbers of people, which according to the Old Testament writers once inhabited the land of promise, will neither appear incredible nor exaggerated.†

The extraordinary fruitfulness of Canaan, and the number of its inhabitants during the prosperous times of the Jewish commonwealth, may be traced to another

* Travels, vol. ii. pp. 234, 235.

† See this statement confirmed by Maundrell, Travels, p. 100. [The population of Palestine in the time of David was upwards of five millions, or between 6000 and 7000 to the square league. See *Michaels' Comment. on the Laws of Moses*, vol. i. art. 26.]—Editor.

and still more powerful cause than any that has been mentioned—the special blessing of Heaven, which that favoured people for many ages exclusively enjoyed. We know from the testimony of Moses that the tribes of Israel reposed under the immediate care of Jehovah, their covenanted God and King, enjoyed his peculiar favour, and were multiplied and sustained by a special compact, in which the rest of the nations had no share : —‘ The Lord shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers to give thee.’* But the blessing of Jehovah converts the desert into a fruitful field: for thus it is promised (and what God promises he is able also to perform) :—‘ The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose ; it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing ; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon ; they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God ; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert, and the parched land shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water : in the habitations of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass, with reeds and rushes.’† In this passage the blessings of salvation, as exhibited in the present dispensation of grace, are certainly intended ; but the use of these figures would be quite improper if the special favour of God could produce no such important changes on the face of nature.

Indeed, the divine blessing has not bestowed the same degree of fruitfulness on every part of Canaan. This fertile country is surrounded by deserts of immense extent, exhibiting a dreary waste of loose and barren sand, on which the skill and industry of man are able to make no impression. The only vegetable

* Deuteronomy xxviii. 11.

† Isaiah xxxv. 1, 2, 6, 7.

productions which occasionally meet the eye of the traveller in these frightful solitudes, are a coarse sickly grass, thinly sprinkled on the sand; a plot of senna, or other saline or bitter herb, or an acacia bush; even these but rarely present themselves to his notice, and afford him little satisfaction when they do, because they warn him that he is yet far distant from a place of abundance and repose.* Moses, who knew these deserts well, calls them 'great and terrible,' 'a desert land,' 'the waste howling wilderness.' But the completest picture of the sandy desert is drawn by the pencil of Jeremiah, in which, with surprising force and brevity, he has exhibited every circumstance of terror, which the modern traveller details with so much pathos and minuteness:—'Neither said they, Where is the Lord that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, that led us through the wilderness, through a land of deserts and of pits, through a land of drought, and of the shadow of death, through a land which no man passed through, and where no man dwelt.'†

Besides these inhospitable deserts which environ the land of promise, the inspired writers mention several wildernesses within its proper limits. In sacred language, a mountainous or less fruitful tract, where the towns and villages are thinly scattered, and single habitations few and far between, is distinguished by the name of the wilderness. The forerunner of our Lord resided in the wilderness of Judea till he commenced his public ministry. We are informed in the book of Genesis, that Ishmael settled in the wilderness of Paran; and in the first book of Samuel, that David took refuge from the persecution of Saul in the same desert, where it appears the numerous flocks of Nabal the Carmelite were pastured. Such places, therefore, were not absolute deserts, but thinly peopled or less fertile districts. But this remark will scarcely apply to the wilderness where our Lord was tempted of the devil.

* Bruce's Travels, vol. iv. p. 580, &c.

† Jeremiah ii. 6.

It is a most miserable, dry, and barren solitude, 'consisting of high rocky mountains, so torn and disordered, as if the earth had here suffered some great convulsion, in which its very bowels had been turned outward.'* A more dismal and solitary place can scarcely be found in the whole earth. About one hour's journey from the foot of the mountains which environ this wilderness, rises the lofty Quarantania, which Maundrell was told is the mountain into which the devil carried our blessed Saviour, that he might show him all the kingdoms and glory of the world. It is, as the evangelist styles it, 'an exceeding high mountain,' and in its ascent both difficult and dangerous. It has a small chapel at the top, and another about half way up, founded on a prominent part of the rock. Near the latter are several caves and holes in the sides of the mountain, occupied formerly by hermits, and even in present times the resort of religious devotees, who repair to these lonely cells to keep their lent, in imitation of our Lord's fasting in the wilderness forty days.

Original Inhabitants.—The descendants of Canaan, the original possessor of this highly interesting country, are thus enumerated by Moses:—'Canaan begat Sidon his first born, and Heth, and the Jebusite, and the Amorite, and the Girgashite, and the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Senite, and the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite.' All these families were settled at first within the limits of Canaan; but the increase of population, or what is more likely, the spirit of emigration and adventure, which is strongly felt in countries where much land remains to be occupied, soon carried them beyond the prescribed limits of their paternal inheritance. The original extent of the land of Canaan, is accurately stated by Moses in these words:—'The border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, as thou comest to Gerar, unto Gaza; and as thou goest unto Sodom, and Gomorrah, and Admah, and Zeboim, even

* Maundrell's Travels.

unto Lasha.* But the sacred historian informs us, that several Canaanitish families, in process of time, settled in the circumjacent countries. His words are:—‘And afterwards were the families of the Canaanites spread abroad ;’ namely, beyond their original bounds, which he then proceeds to describe.

The true situation of Sidon, the first born of Canaan, is clearly determined by the famous city of that name.

The descendants of Heth, or the Hittites, the second family of Canaan mentioned by Moses, were planted in the southern division of the country.† Moses informs us, that Sarah died at Hebron, and ‘Abraham spake to the sons of Heth’ about the purchase of a burying-place ; and adds in a following verse, ‘Abraham stood up and bowed himself to the people of the land, even to the children of Heth ;’ which sufficiently proves their claim to that part of the family inheritance.‡ The principal settlements of the Hittites were in the mountainous part of the country ; for the Hittites are mentioned with the Jebusites as dwelling in the mountains.§

Next to the Hittites, in the same tract of country, and not less renowned for bravery, were planted the sons of Jebus, who seem to have been its original inhabitants.

The Amorites also dwelt in the mountainous region of Canaan, in the immediate neighbourhood of the Hittites and the Jebusites. ‘The Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites,’ said the spies in their report to Moses, ‘dwell in the mountains.’|| The correctness of this statement was afterwards attested by Joshua (one of these spies) in the history of his wars ;¶ and by his great predecessor, in his last address to the

* Genesis x. 19.

† Bochart. Phaleg. lib. iv. c. 36. p. 304 ; Wells’ Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 137.

‡ Genesis xxiii. 7.

¶ Numbers xiii. 29.

§ Joshua xi. 3.

¶ Joshua xi. 3.

people of Israel, in which he calls the mountainous tract lying next to Kadesh-barnea, 'the mount of the Amorites.'* This nation seems to have occupied a considerable extent of country stretching towards the Jordan; for when Chedorlaomer and the confederate kings invaded Canaan, in the days of Abraham, they smote the Amorites that were in Hazazon-tamar, the same as En-gedi,† which we know from other parts of Scripture, was placed among the mountains near the river Jordan.

The primitive settlements of the Amorites seem to have been about Kadesh-barnea, near the wilderness of Paran; for the sacred historian mentions them as a people which the tribes of Israel were forbidden to attack in war.‡ This tract was therefore called emphatically the *land of the Amorites*, and Sihon, the king of it, is always styled *Sihon king of the Amorites*. The sacred writers mention another Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin, which lay at some distance from Kadesh-barnea. Moses was informed by Jehovah, that the border of their inheritance should turn from the south to the ascent of Akrabbim, and pass on to Zin; 'and the going thereof shall be from the south to Kadesh-barnea.' This Kadesh, near the wilderness of Paran, where the hosts of Israel encamped a long time, was the place whither the spies returned from searching the land of Canaan, and where, by their unbelief, they brought upon themselves, and the whole nation who gave credit to their report, the judgment of wandering forty years in the deserts of Arabia. But the Israelites came not to Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin, till the last year of that period. From these considerations, it appears that Kadesh in the wilderness of Paran, and Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin, were two distinct places, at a considerable distance from each other.§

* Deut. i. 7.

† 2 Chron. xx. 2.

‡ Numb. xxi. 13; Deut. i. 4; Michaelis Spicil. part ii. p. 12.

§ Wells' Historical Geography, vol. i. p. 273.

The Girgashite is the next family mentioned by Moses, who seem to have settled toward the sources of the Jordan. Here, on the eastern side of the sea of Tiberias or Galilee, stood the city of Gergesa ; a name probably derived from the Girgashites.

The Hivite was planted in the country adjoining to Sidon, in the upper or northern parts of Canaan ; for in the book of Judges it is stated that the Hivites dwelt in mount Lebanon, from mount Baal-hermon unto the entering in of Hamath.*

These were the families that originally peopled the land of Canaan, and their relative situations. But the statement now made, must be understood only in reference to the first settlements of the sons of Canaan ; for, in the lapse of ages, they intermingled with one another, or migrated to countries at some considerable distance from their allotted inheritance. Of all these families, the Amorite became the most numerous and powerful : they founded kingdoms on both sides of the Jordan, and frequently gave their name to any one or more of the other nations of Canaan.

The remaining families of Canaan, mentioned by Moses in the tenth chapter of Genesis, in the opinion of Dr Wells, most probably seated themselves within the true borders of Canaan ; but in process of time, being dispossessed by the Philistines of at least the greater part of their original inheritance, they were obliged to remove their settlements nearer to one another in some parts of the country, or to leave their native soil in quest of other possessions. The descendants of these families, who were thus driven from the land of Canaan, or blended into one society by the hostile irruption of the Philistines, receive the general name of Canaanites from the sacred writers ; because they could no longer distinguish them by their peculiar names. Thus, when the spies reported that the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwelt in the

* Judges iii. 3 ; Michaelis Spicil. part ii. p. 21.

mountains, and the Canaanites by the sea, and by the coast of Jordan ;* the meaning is supposed to be, the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites dwell in the mountains ; but the mixed descendants of the five other families, which can no longer be distinguished, and are therefore designed by the general name of Canaanites, dwell either in what is left them by the sea, or else, where they have since seated themselves by the coast of Jordan.†

Where these exiled or blended families that originally bore the names of the Arkite, Senite, Arvadite, Zemarite, and Hamathite, finally settled, it may be difficult to determine. In a subject so obscure, and of an antiquity so remote, we can only hope to approximate the truth. In stating the scanty hints which ancient geographers have left behind them, I shall follow the order of the inspired writer.

The Arkite, who is first mentioned by Moses, is thought to have settled about that part of mount Libanus, where the city of Acre is placed by Ptolemy and other geographers.‡

The situation of the Senite is supposed to be indicated by a city not far from the Arkite settlement, called Sin. The district where it stood still retained its name in the time of Jerome, who mentions the fact, though the city itself had disappeared by the ravages of war, in ages long anterior to the period when he flourished.

The memory of the Arvadite seems to be preserved in the little isle of Aradus, on the coast of Syria, whither, it is conjectured, the Arvadites fled for safety from the cruelty of their invaders. Bochart says they occupied an island on the coast of Phœnicia at the mouth of the river Eleutheros, and part of the neighbouring continent, where stood Laodicea and other cities.

* Numb. xiii. 29.

† Wells' Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 134, &c.

‡ Bochart, Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 36, p. 305 ; Wells' Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 140.

The Zemarite probably settled on the neighbouring continent, for geographers find a town on that part of the coast named Simyra, not far from Orthosia : and Eusebius expressly traces the origin of the Orthosians to the Samareans. The Jewish historian also mentions a city called Zemaraim, in the tribe of Benjamin, probably from some of the Zemarites that settled there, within the land of Canaan.*

The only remaining family is the Hamathite, or the inhabitants of the land of Hamath, often mentioned in the Scriptures, and whose principal city was called Hamath. This some understand of Antioch, an ancient and celebrated city of Syria, situated on both sides of the Orontes, about twelve miles from the shores of the Mediterranean ; others of Epiphania, or the Lesser Hamath.†

But besides the sons of Canaan and their descendants, who were settled within the limits of the promised land, or in its immediate vicinity, several tribes and nations of different origin, fixed their abodes in the circumjacent countries, of which it is necessary to take some notice.

The sacred historian mentions a people under the name of Avims, whose settlements extended from Hazerim unto Azzah.‡ Azzah, in the opinion of all interpreters, is the same city that was afterwards known by the name of Gaza ; and Hazerim is probably the same place that Moses, in the book of Numbers, calls Hazaroth, in whose neighbourhood the children of Israel had one of their stations, as they travelled through the deserts of Arabia.

These people were probably descendants of Cush ; and in process of time were dispossessed of this tract of country by the PHILISTINES, descendants of Mizraim, who seized upon the country of the Avims, and the adjacent parts of Canaan lying on the Mediterranean.

* Bochart. Phaleg. lib. iv. cap. 36, p. 307.

† Michaelis Spicil. part ii. p. 52 ; Wells' Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 141.

‡ Deuteronomy ii. 23.

The possessions of the Philistines were divided into five lordships, denominated from their chief towns, Gaza, Ashdod, Askelon, Gath, and Ekron.

On the south of Canaan the Horites inhabited mount Seir, and the country as far as the wilderness of Paran. Toward the east and south-east dwelt a gigantic race of men called the Emims; and due east another people of great stature, under the name of Zuzims or Zam-zummims. On the north-east were settled the Rephaims, a branch of the same family. These several tribes or nations inhabited the regions adjoining to Canaan, when Abraham arrived in the promised land, except the country toward the north, which was possessed by some of the families of Canaan; but their descent is no longer to be traced in the records of time.

When the sacred writer says that Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and his confederates, smote the Rephaims, Zuzims, Emims, and Horites, and also the country of the Amalekites, the last clause is perhaps to be understood proleptically, that they smote the country which was afterwards occupied by the Amalekites: for the Amalekites were probably descended from Amalek, a grandson of Esau, and if this was the case no such people existed in the days of Chedorlaomer.†

In the opinion of Dr Shaw the land of promise was not only to extend along the lower part of the Nile, known to us by the name of the Pelusiac branch, but even a great way higher up to the south-west, as far as the parallel of the ancient Memphis and of the Red Sea; and the reason he assigns is that the land of Goshen was allotted to the people of Israel; for Goshen lay contiguous to this part of the Nile, and was watered by it. In proof of which Joshua is said (chap. x. 41) ‘to smite the countries and people, from Kadesh-barnea even unto Gaza, and all the country of Goshen;’ that is, all the countries and people that lay to the north-

* See further about the Philistines afterwards.—*Editor*.

† Wells’ *Hist. Geog.* vol. i. p. 142.

ward as far as the Great Sea, and to the westward as far as the Nile. And again (chap. xi. 16), 'So Joshua took all that land, the hills and all the south coast, and all the land of Goshen.' 'The very situation, therefore, and the extent of the lot of the tribe of Judah, very naturally,' continues our author, 'points out to us the river of Egypt, *i. e.* the Nile, to have been their western boundary.'*

But to the singular opinion of this learned writer the most decisive arguments may be opposed. The nation of Israel dwelt in Goshen when they were in the land of Egypt, and in the house of bondage: therefore Goshen was a part of Egypt which was not comprehended in the promised inheritance of the chosen seed. The sacred writers constantly speak of their people going up out of the land of Egypt to the land which Jehovah had promised to the patriarchs; but if they had obtained the grant of Goshen in Egypt, how could it be said they went up out of Egypt to the land which had been promised to their fathers? They were, according to Dr Shaw's hypothesis, already in possession of the promised land; and all they had to do, was to vindicate their claim against their oppressors. In fine, when the people of Israel were advanced a considerable way into the wilderness, they repented of their undertaking, and spake of appointing a captain to lead them back into Egypt, or the land of Goshen, from whence they had emigrated: Goshen on the Nile, therefore, could not belong to the promised land.

Let us now attend to the proofs which Dr Shaw brings in support of his opinion, from the book of Joshua. 1. It is said Joshua smote all the countries and people from Kadesh-barnea, even unto Gaza; and all the country of Goshen. It is readily granted, that the country of Goshen mentioned by Joshua, must have been in the very neighbourhood of Gaza; but Gaza, though a frontier city, was dis-

* Shaw's Travels, vol. ii. p. 40.

tant many days' journey across the burning desert, from Goshen in Egypt. Nor is it probable, that this country, which had been completely drained of its inhabitants by the departure of Israel, and deprived of its most powerful support by the destruction of Pharaoh and his numerous hosts in the Red Sea, was able to offer any resistance to the victorious arms of Joshua. To subdue the land of Goshen, the armies of Israel must have gone back again into Egypt; respecting which expedition the Scriptures are entirely silent: and therefore it may be concluded with perfect certainty, that such an event never took place.

2. From the eleventh chapter we learn that Joshua took all the land of the hills, and all the south coast, and all the land of Goshen. But this place could not be Goshen in Egypt; for no history, sacred or profane, mentions the supposed occupation of that country by the people of Israel, after their departure from it under the conduct of Moses. In the seventeenth verse Joshua says, that the whole country which he conquered lay from 'mount Halak, that goeth up to Seir, even unto Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon, under mount Hermon.' In this tract, then, lay the Goshen that he conquered; and the only point to be settled is, what was the situation of the mount Halak, which terminated the southern boundary toward Egypt. This is rendered easy by a short notice concerning Goshen in the tenth chapter, which is couched in these words: —'Joshua smote them from Kadesh-barnea even unto Gaza; and all the country of Goshen, *even unto Gibeon.*'* Goshen therefore extended to Gibeon; but this was a city of Canaan, whose inhabitants artfully prevailed on Joshua and the elders of the congregation to enter into a treaty of peace; and which lay so near Gilgal, where Joshua had pitched his camp, that the army of Israel came to its assistance against the confederate kings, after no more than one night's

* Joshua x. 41.

march, which, on the hypothesis of Dr Shaw, was quite impossible. The situation of mount Halak affords another proof that the Goshen subdued by Joshua is not to be sought for in the kingdom of Egypt. That mountain did not lie on the road to Egypt, but on the road from Canaan to Seir, the country of Esau. Now, Seir lay on the south of Canaan, between the lake Asphaltites and the Red Sea; while the Egyptian Goshen lay to the south-west, in the east side of Egypt, upon the eastern channel of the Nile, afterwards called Trajan's river. Hence it is evident that Joshua spake of Goshen in the land of Canaan, in the immediate neighbourhood of Gibeon, on the south side of the inheritance of Judah.

Goshen in the Sanscrit language signifies a shepherd, and Goshana the land of shepherds. It seems to have had the same meaning in Egypt, and in the Lesser Asia, and to have been given as an appropriate name to regions distinguished by the richness and extent of their pastures. We know from the sacred writings that the country of Goshen in Egypt was admirably fitted for the rearing of cattle; and on this very account selected for the residence of Jacob and his family, who, following the example of their fathers, had from their earliest days devoted themselves to the pastoral life. For the same reason the land of Goshen in Canaan probably received its name; it was a land more adapted than the surrounding districts, by its rich and abundant pastures, to the trade of a shepherd.

The land of Canaan was reserved by the wisdom and goodness of Heaven, for the possession of his peculiar people, and the display of the most stupendous wonders. The theatre was small, but admirably situated for the convenient observation of the human race,—at the junction of the two great continents of Asia and Africa, and almost within sight of Europe. From this highly favoured spot, as from a common centre, the report of God's wonderful works, the glad tidings of

salvation through the obedience and sufferings of his own eternal Son, might be rapidly and easily wafted to every part of the globe, and circulated through every nation. When the Most High therefore fixed the boundaries of the post-diluvian kingdoms, he reserved the inheritance of Canaan for the future seat of his glory; and while powerful states and extended empires rose and flourished in the circumjacent regions, his secret providence parcelled out the land of promise among a number of petty kings, whose individual weakness and jarring interests gave them an easy prey to the armies of Israel. To this arrangement the inspired prophet certainly refers in these words, 'Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations; ask thy father and he will show thee, thy elders and they will tell thee. When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people, according to the number of the children of Israel.* Canaan and his posterity were directed to take possession of Palestine; rather than any other branch of Noah's descendants, because he had already fallen under the solemn malediction of his grandfather Noah, for his unnatural conduct; and they were permitted to fill up the measure of their iniquity by a general corruption of manners, and particularly, by departing from the knowledge and worship of the true God, to the service of idols; and therefore might be justly driven out, when the time fixed in the divine purpose arrived, to make room for the chosen people of Jehovah. Their bounds, says the inspired writer, he set according to the number of the children of Israel; for Canaan and his eleven sons exactly corresponded with the twelve tribes, into which the family of Jacob was divided.

[The boundaries of the land occupied by this multitude of petty tribes, and predestined to form the inherit-

* Deuteronomy xxxii. 7, 8.

ance of Israel, were traced with extraordinary accuracy and minuteness of detail by Moses to that people before their occupation of it :—‘ When ye come into the land of Canaan (this is the land that shall fall unto you for an inheritance, even the land of Canaan, with the coasts thereof); then your south quarter shall be from the wilderness of Zin, along by the coast of Edom (*i. e.* from El Ghor and El Araba along by Idumea), and (more particularly as to the boundary), your south border shall be the outmost coast of the Salt Sea eastward (*i. e.* the south-eastern extremity of lake Asphaltites); and your border shall turn from the south to the ascent of Acrabbim (the mountains of Accaba, which extend as far as the head of the Elanitic, or eastern gulf of the Red Sea), and pass on to Zin (the wilderness on the east of mount Hor); and the going forth thereof shall be from the south to Kadesh-barnea, and shall go on to Hazaradar, and pass on to Azmon (the last city the Israelites possessed towards Egypt, it was east of the river of Egypt, or Rhinocolura), and the border shall fetch a compass (turn westwards) from Azmon unto the River of Egypt, and the going out of it shall be at the sea (Mediterranean).

[‘ And as for the western border, ye shall even have the Great Sea for a border; this shall be your west border (the Mediterranean was called the Great Sea, in comparison with the small inland seas, the Dead Sea, and Sea of Tiberias).

[‘ And this shall be your north border; from the Great Sea ye shall point out for you mount Hor (Hebrew, Hor-ha-hor, the two-fold mountain, Libanus and Anti-libanus, which extend in a north-easterly direction from the Mediterranean to Damascus): From mount Hor ye shall point out your border unto the entrance of Hamath* (a petty kingdom extending along Lebanon

* Or, as it is more particularly described, ‘ All Lebanon, towards the sun-rising, from (the valley of) Baal-gad under mount Hermon, unto the entrance of Hamath,’ Joshua xiii. 5. Dr Wells is of opi-

from the Mediterranean on the west to the kingdom of Damascus on the east), and the goings forth of the border shall be Zedad (now Südüd, a large village situated in the desert east of the road from Damascus to Hurus), and the border shall go to Ziphron, and the goings out of it shall be at Hazar-enan (in the neighbourhood of Damascus*), this shall be your north border.

[‘ And ye shall point out your *east border* from Hazar-enan to Shepham (Apamea), and the coast shall go down from Shepham to Riblah (said by Theodoret to have been called Emesa in his time, and to have been situated on the Orontes ; but thought by Dr Robinson to be the modern Ribleh, a village ten or twelve hours S S.W. of Hurus, on the Orontes), on the east side of Ain (the source of the Jordan), and the border shall descend, and shall reach unto the side of the sea of Chinnereth eastward. And the border shall go down to Jordan on the east side, and the goings out of it shall be at the Salt Sea ; this shall be your land, with the coasts thereof round about.’

[*Political Divisions*.—In order to understand the incidents of the sacred narrative, and the doings of the principal personages who are introduced into its pages, it is essential that we consider the condition of Palestine at four different epochs of its history,—at the conquest of Joshua,—during the administration of Solomon,—in and after the reign of Rehoboam,—and in the time of our Lord,—for at each of these successive periods, a new and very different distribution of the country obtained.

[*Division on the conquest of Joshua*.—The children of Israel did not obtain possession of their inheritance immediately on their arrival at the borders of the promised land. It was then, as has already been described, in the occupation of a great variety of petty tribes or kingdoms, the people of which are often included in

nion, that Hor-ha-hor, or the two-fold mountain, included mount Hermon.—*Editor*.

* Ezekiel xlviii. 1.

scripture under the general name of Canaanites. But the original inhabitants of Palestine having been doomed by the justice of God, on account of their iniquities, to be dispossessed, and his mercy having, at the same time, provided that their expulsion should be effected, not by one fell swoop through the relentless elements of nature employed as the instruments of his vengeance, as in the case of Sodom and Gomorrah, but by the gradual progress of a people, a knowledge of whose history, and intercourse with whom might wean them from idolatry to the service of the true God,—Joshua had no sooner reached the confines of the promised inheritance, than he made preparations for its invasion. In the course of five years he undertook two different expeditions for that purpose ; during the first of which he made himself master of the eastern, and during the latter of which he obtained possession of the northern, quarters of the country. And no sooner had the Lord given him rest from his enemies round about, and secured him in the entire and undisputed possession of the land,* than he distributed the inheritance among the various tribes of Israel. Having made a scheme of division of the land into twelve parts, he assigned to each tribe its portion by lot ; so that, according to this arrangement, each tribe was put in possession of a distinct and independent territory, within the limits of which, all who resided, or who had any property, were connected by the ties of a common brotherhood, while its smaller subdivisions and localities were so appropri-

* The expressions in the text are to be taken with considerable limitations. The command was given the Israelites, 'to drive out all the inhabitants of the land ;' and they were told, that 'if they did not drive out the inhabitants of the land before them, then it should come to pass, that those which ye shall let remain of them shall be pricks in your eyes, and thorns in your sides, and shall vex you in the land wherein ye dwell,' Num. xxxiii. 51-55. They in several instances were negligent or supine in the execution of this command, and consequently they were subjected to annoyances during the whole progress of their history from their restless neighbours, particularly the Philistines.—*Editor.*

ated, that members of the same families and near relations were placed in the immediate neighbourhood of each other. In the circumstances of the chosen people at that period, this distribution of the land was made on a principle the most prudent, equitable, and best calculated to preserve harmony, good-feeling, and contentment among so vast a population; and, at the same time, it was accompanied with such provisions as afforded an effectual guarantee, that no change of circumstances,—neither the formation of new family connexions, nor the occurrence of misfortunes in life, should disturb this original division of property. Every man's possession was, from the first, declared inalienable in his family, nor even on the marriage of an heiress in one tribe to a person belonging to another, could the property be conveyed from that to which it originally belonged.* Moreover, to prevent the loss of property by casualties of another description, a provision was made for the discharge of all debts every seventh year;† while another singular law, the law of jubilee, enacted that every fiftieth year, in order to restore, as far as possible, the face of society, there should be a general restitution,—that all servants of Hebrew origin should obtain their freedom, and that inheritances, which had been sold or given up, in the way of mortgage or pledge for debts, and not previously redeemed, should return all over the land, to the families by whom they were originally possessed.‡ There was consummate wisdom

* Numb. xxxvi. 6, 7.

† Deut. xv. 1-12.

‡ Lev. xxv. 10. Every Israelite held his possession on the condition of his bearing arms in the defence of his country. A very striking illustration of this is afforded by the procedure of the public council, composed of the heads of tribes in reference to a case that occurred during the unhappy war against the Benjamites. When the allied army rendezvoused at Mizpeh, it appeared that Jabesh-gilead had not furnished a single volunteer for the camp; whereupon, to chastise that refractory city, and strike salutary terror into the whole commonwealth of Israel, 12,000 soldiers were marched to put all the inhabitants of the place to the sword, Judges xxi. 8-13.

—*Editor.*

displayed in this constitution, for not only was it admirably calculated to foster a race of independent free-men, whose family attachments would bind them to the soil, and furnish the tribes in common with a strong bond of union in repelling the aggressions of an enemy; but by preserving equality in families, it tended to prevent the machinations of the ambitious,—none having an opportunity of acquiring the power to oppress, or the wealth that could enable him to bribe accomplices to aid in such unprincipled designs. By securing every one a sufficient, though small independence, it put an effectual bar to the introduction of those vices that arise out of a state of riches and luxuriousness; while, by the constant and patient industry, that was required in the cultivation of every corner of their little possessions, it tended to rear a frugal people, in circumstances the best adapted for their education in the principles of sound morality and genuine religion.

[The division of the land into tribes was in the following order:—

[Asher, tribe of, was located in the north-west province of Palestine, and was bounded on the north by Libanus, on the south by Carmel, on the west by the Mediterranean, except on the more northerly parts, reaching to Tyre and Sidon, which, through sloth or cowardice, were never recovered from the Phœnicians.* Its greatest length may be estimated at about fifty miles, and its greatest breadth about thirty-four; but its territory in general did not equal this extent. It was a very fertile country, and being well watered by the numerous streams that poured down the sides of the adjoining ridge of Lebanon, it was clothed with a rich and luxuriant verdure. But, lying on the sea-coast, it was principally a maritime province; and hence, in the song of Deborah, Asher is said to have ‘continued on the sea-shore, and abode in his creeks.’† The population of this tribe in the wilderness amount-

* Judges iii. 3.

† Judges v. 17.

ed to 53,400, and the territory assigned them comprehended twenty-two large cities, interspersed with a great number of smaller villages; the principal of which were, Abdon, Achshaph, Achzib, Kanah, Elkath, Mishol, Rehob, Cabul, a group of twenty cities given to Hiram,* Misrephoth-maim, remarkable for salt-pits,† Aphik, for the overthrow of the Syrians in the time of the monarchy,‡ and Accho, or Ptolemais,§ now Acre.¶ This latter was long an insignificant place, till Ptolemy Philadelphus rebuilt and raised it to importance, from its convenience as a sea-port, and called it after his own name. From its situation and strong fortress, it forms the key to the whole country; and accordingly it has largely shared in all the wars and distresses, of which, for so long a succession of ages, this country has been the scene.¶ There were some Christians resident here in the primitive age of the gospel; for Paul, in his voyage to Jerusalem, visited them. A few mutilated buildings and pillars still remain as monuments of its ancient grandeur.

[Naphtali, tribe of, also lay on the north of Palestine, and was bounded on the north by Lebanon, on the south by Zebulun, on the west by Asher, and on the east by Jordan and the lake of Gennesareth. Its superficial extent was about thirty miles in length, by twenty in breadth. The face of the country is beautifully diversified by hills and valleys, and was a valuable possession, both on account of its pasturage and grain produce. This tribe numbered 45,400 before

* 1 Kings ix. 13.

† Joshua xi. 8.

‡ Judges i. 31; 1 Kings xx. 26, 30.

§ Judges i. 31; Acts. xxi. 7.

¶ This name it received from St John de Acra, a chief of the knights of Jerusalem, who long established themselves there.—*Editor.*

¶ In modern times, it is famous for the gallant opposition which the British troops under Sir Sidney Smith, made against the French under Bonaparte; and still more recently, for the attack by the British, commanded by Commodore Napier, on the Egyptian garrison under Ibrahim.—*Editor.*

entering Palestine, and the canton appropriated to them contained nineteen large cities, besides many smaller towns ; some of which, however, they unwisely and sinfully allowed the ancient idolatrous inhabitants to retain.* Its principal cities were, Abel, or Abellath-maachah, to which Sheba fled to escape from the soldiers of David.† At two subsequent periods, it was taken and ravaged, first by Benhadad,‡ and long after by Tiglath-pileser, by whom its inhabitants were transported to captivity in Syria.§ It afterwards rose from its ashes, and became a place of note. Bethanath and Bethshemesh,|| Harosheth,¶ Kedesh, the residence of Barak, and Hazor ; the ancient inhabitants, though subdued by Joshua, made an effort to regain their independence, and to make Israel their tributaries, but were overthrown by Barak.**

[Zebulun, tribe of, was bounded on the north by Asher and Naphtali, on the south by Issachar, on the east by the lake of Gennesareth, and on the west by the Mediterranean, comprising a district forty-eight miles long, by thirty-six broad. Its surface was beautifully undulated by hill and dale, and being well watered by a great number of springs and rivulets, it was an eminently flourishing province. This tribe, before entering Palestine, numbered 60,500, and their district, when they took possession of it, counted twelve large cities. The chief of these were, Cinnereth, from which the lake of Gennesareth derived its ancient name, Shimron, Nahahol, and Kitron (Sepphoris or Diocæsarea, now Safauz), Gath-hepher, the birth-place of Jonah,†† and Aijalon, near which Elon, one of the Judges, was buried.‡‡ This tribe acquired a considerable degree of reputation for their martial spirit and achievements, not only during the war of invasion,

* Joshua xix. 32.

† 1 Kings xv. 20.

‡ Judges i. 33.

** Judges iv.

‡‡ Judges xii. 12.

† 2 Samuel xx. 14.

§ 2 Kings xv. 29.

¶ Judges iv. 2, 16.

†† 2 Kings xiv. 25.

but afterwards in the time of the Judges, first under Barak, then under Gideon.* They were distinguished by their loyalty in the time of David, and by their public piety in the time of Hezekiah.† This canton was afterwards distinguished for the high privilege of being the favourite scene of the Saviour's discourses, and from which the majority of his disciples were chosen.

[Issachar, tribe of, was bounded on the north by Zebulun and mount Tabor, on the east by Jordan and the lake of Gennesareth, on the south-west by the southern half tribe of Manasseh, and on the west by a small strip of land, which, extending along the Mediterranean, joined the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh with that of Asher.‡ It was a most beautiful and fertile region, of which no greater proof need be given, than that it comprehended the celebrated plain of Esdraelon, mount Hermon, and the Kishon. Its lineal dimensions were forty-seven miles long, by twenty-six miles broad, thus comprising a territory of very considerable extent; the whole of which, however, did not belong to this tribe, as about 170 square miles of ground, nearly in the heart of the canton, belonged to the half tribe of Manasseh. It contained originally sixteen large cities, besides small villages, the principal of which were, Aphek, where the Philistine forces rendezvoused on the eve of the fatal battle of Gilboa,§ Bethshemesh, Dothan, famous for being the spot where Joseph was sold,|| and where, long after, the soldiers of Benhadad, who were despatched to lay hold of Elisha, were struck with blindness;¶ Bezek, where Saul numbered the people;** Hadadrimmon, where Josiah was slain;†† Jezreel, the site of a royal palace, and infamous as the scene of Jezebel's crimes and

* Judges iv. 10; vi. 35; xii. 11.

† 1 Chron. xii. 33; 2 Chron. xxx. 11.

§ 1 Samuel xxix. 1.

¶ 2 Kings vi. 18.

†† 2 Chron. xxxv. 22-24; Zech. xii. 11.

‡ Joshua xvii. 10.

§ Gen. xxxvii. 27, 28.

** 1 Samuel xi. 8.

dreadful fate;* Shunem, the residence of the Shunamite woman, who showed hospitality to Elisha;† Shalim or Salim, which Saul traversed in quest of his father's asses,‡ and near to which John's baptisms were celebrated.§

[Manasseh,|| west half tribe of, was stationed in a narrow and irregular province, which was bounded on the north by Issachar, on the south by Ephraim, on the east by the Jordan, and on the west by the Mediterranean, and computed a territory about fifty miles long, and from ten to twenty miles broad. The smallness of its own canton was compensated to this tribe by the large portions of ground within the provinces of Asher and Issachar which were assigned to it, amounting to an extent of more than 200 square miles.¶ This tribe, which was very numerous,** furnished some of the most eminent men of ancient Israel, —Gideon, Abimelech, Jair, Jephtha, Barzillais, and Elijah. The principal cities of this tribe were Abel-meholah, distinguished as the scene of Gideon's victory over the Midianites,†† and also as the birth-place of Elisha;‡‡ Bethshan, in the valley of which the corpse of Saul was fastened;§§ Dor, Endor, the residence of the witch whom Saul consulted;||| Megiddo, where the army of Jabin was defeated, and king Ahaziah afterwards died;¶¶ Taanaeh-Tiphsah-Tirzah, whose beautiful situation obtained for it the distinction of being a favourite residence of the kings of Israel, before Samaria was founded;*** and Zarthan, in the plain between

* 2 Kings ix. 16-37.

† 1 Samuel xxviii. 4.

‡ 1 Samuel ix. 4.

§ John iii. 23.

|| Jacob adopted the two sons of Joseph as his sons, and thus transferred the right of primogeniture, which was a double portion, from Reuben to Joseph; Deut. xxi. 17; 1 Chron. v. 1.—*Editor*.

¶ Joshua xvii. 11.

** Numbers xxvi. 34.

†† Judges vii. 22.

‡‡ 1 Kings xix. 16.

§§ 1 Samuel xxxi. 10; afterwards called Scythopolis.—*Editor*.

|| Now in ruins.—*Editor*.

¶¶ Judges v. 19; 2 Kings ix. 27.

*** 1 Kings xiv. 17; xvi. 9, 23; Song vi. 4.

which and Succoth, Hiram cast the brazen vessels for Solomon.* This tribe testified their loyalty to David, by repairing, to the number of 18,000, to Jerusalem, on the splendid occasion of his coronation; and their adherence to the pure worship of their fathers was evinced in a striking manner, by their emigrating in great numbers, in the reign of Asa, to the kingdom of Judah, in order to enjoy the privilege of religious ordinances.†

[Ephraim, tribe of, lay south of the former, but the respective boundaries of the two cannot be well ascertained. It was bounded on the north by Manasseh, on the south by Benjamin, on the east by Jordan, and on the west by the Mediterranean, comprising a district fifty-two miles in length, and thirty-five at its greatest breadth, although in several parts it was not more than twenty broad. Its principal cities were Armah, Baalhazor, Baalshalisha, Bethhorn, Upper and Nether, situated three miles distance from each other, the one on the hill, the other in the valley. It was near this place that the miraculous shower of hailstones destroyed the hostile kings in the time of Joshua. It was built by Sherah, daughter of Beriah,‡ rebuilt by Solomon,§ and smitten by the soldiers|| of Amaziah.|| Gezer, whose king and army were destroyed by Joshua, although it seems to have recovered and refused allegiance down to Solomon's time.¶ Gob, where in a battle with the Philistines, a famous giant was slain.** Janoah,†† Lasharon, or Sharon, where the royal herds were afterwards stationed.‡‡ Lebonah (now Lebar, a village twenty-four miles from Jerusalem).§§ Ramah, called also Ramathaim,||| and afterwards Arimathea,¶¶ ¶¶

* 1 Kings vii. 46.

† 2 Chron. xv. 9.

‡ 1 Chron. vii. 24.

§ 2 Chron. viii. 5.

|| 2 Chron. xxv. 13.

¶¶ Joshua x. 33; 1 Kings ix. 16.

** 2 Samuel xxi. 18.

†† 2 Kings xv. 29.

‡‡ Joshua xii. 18: also 1 Chron. xxvii. 29; Song ii. 1; Isaiah xxxv. 2.

§§ Judges xxi. 19; Maundrell and Richardson.

||| 1 Samuel i. 1, 19.

¶¶ Luke xxiii. 51.

the residence of Deborah, the nativity, abode, and burial-place of Samuel. Baasha began, but stopped in the rebuilding of it.* It was the depôt of Nebuzaradan's prisoners on the capture of Jerusalem,† a circumstance which occasioned the deep lamentations which the prophet predicted would be heard in Ramah,‡ although that prophecy had a secondary and remote reference to an event in the early life of Christ. Lydda, called also Diospolis, or the city of Jupiter, by the crusaders St George, this bay being the supposed scene of that martyr's death, in consequence of which a splendid church was erected and called after him by Justinian. In sacred history it is remarkable chiefly as the place where Peter healed the paralytic Eneas. Samaria, the work of Omri, built by that monarch on a piece of high land, which he bought from Shechem; the name Samaria is derived from Shemer, the original owner of the place, and it became a favourite residence of the later kings of Israel.§ Shechem, Sychem, or Sychar, where the unsuspecting inhabitants were massacred by the ruthless swords of Simeon and Levi,||—where Joshua gave his final admonitions to Israel,—where, on the entry of the Israelites into Canaan, the venerable remains of Joseph were deposited;¶ where Abimelech conspired against his brethren,** the disconcerted tribes raised the standard of revolt against Rehoboam,†† and where long after a memorable interview took place between our Lord and a female inhabitant of the town. Shiloh, where Joshua erected the tabernacle,—whither he commanded the whole congregation to repair for the purposes of devotion,‡‡ and where it remained until the close of Eli's life, when the ark was captured by the Philistines. §§ This

* 1 Kings xv. 17-22.

† Jeremiah xxxi. 15; Matt. ii. 18.

‡ Genesis xxxiv.

** Judges ix.

†† Joshua xviii. 1.

G.

† Jeremiah xl. 1.

§ 1 Kings xvi. 24.

¶ Joshua xxiv. 32.

†† 1 Kings xii. 25.

§§ 1 Samuel iv.

place was famous for several other events of notoriety in sacred history ; for the division of the land by lots ;* for the rape of the young women by the Benjamites ;† as the spot where Hannah dedicated her son unto the Lord ;‡ where young Samuel was favoured with his first visions,§ and where the prophet Abijah long after established his residence.|| Thebez, where Abimelech was killed by a millstone.¶ Timnath-Serah, which Joshua founded, and in which he lived and was buried.** Zereda, the birth-place of Jero-boam.††

[Dan, tribe of, was bounded on the north by Ephraim, on the east by Judah and Benjamin, on the south by Simeon, and on the west by Ephraim. The inheritance given to Dan comprised a territory extending to about twenty-four miles from north to south, and about eighteen miles from Benjamin to the Mediterranean. But in consequence of their inability to expel the Philistines, the whole of the extensive country occupied by that warlike people was lost to them, and their possessions in consequence so much reduced as to form perhaps the smallest canton in Israel. Nevertheless, within its circumscribed limits lay an exceedingly beautiful and fertile country ; the agreeable diversity of hill and dale, the multitude of little overflowing rivulets that watered it, and the necessity, from the smallness of its extent, of bringing every spot under cultivation, rendered the province of Dan proverbial for the abundance as well as the superior quality of its produce. Not only were luxuriant crops of grain raised on its well tilled fields, but some of the most fragrant and delicious fruits, indigenous to Palestine, were most successfully cultivated in the vineyards of Timnath, and in the valley of Eshtaol. The tribe

* Joshua xviii. 8, 10.

† 1 Samuel i. 9-18.

‡ 1 Kings xiv. 2.

** Joshua xix. 49 ; xxiv. 30.

† Judges xxi. 19.

§ 1 Samuel iii.

¶ Judges ix. 53.

†† 1 Kings xi. 26.

of Dan, before entering the confines of the promised land, amounted to a population of 64,400.* Its principal cities were Aijalon, noted in sacred history as the spot where Jonathan narrowly escaped being made the victim of his father's rash adjuration,† and as one of the numerous cities taken from Ahaz during a successful invasion of the Philistines.‡ Bethcar.§ Eshtaol, near which several of Samson's exploits were achieved, and he was afterwards buried.|| Joppa, a maritime town of great antiquity, supposed to have been founded by Japhet, whence it was called anciently Japho,¶ which is now corrupted into Jaffa or Yâfa. The town stood upon a conical hill, and it acquired great importance in the days of Israel's glory, not so much either from its extent or wealth, as from its being the principal port for debarkation to Jerusalem. The convenience of its situation overcame its natural disadvantages; for according to Josephus it was not fit for a haven, on account of the impetuous south winds that beat upon it, and the rolling sands that come from the sea against the shores, which do not admit of ships lying in their station. These natural obstacles still lie in the way of its being made a commodious harbour, 'for the port,' to use the language of Buckingham, 'is formed of a ledge of rocks, running north and south before the promontory, leaving a confined and shallow space between those rocks and the town. Here the small trading vessels of the country find shelter from south and west winds, and land their cargoes on narrow wharfs, running along before the magazines.' Large vessels, however, to avoid the shoals and numerous rocks, generally anchor a mile from the port. There

* Numbers xxvi. 43.

† 1 Samuel xiv. 31.

‡ 2 Chron. xxviii. 18.

§ 1 Samuel vii. 11.

|| Judges xiii. 25; xvi. 31. The city of Eshtaol originally belonged to Judah, but was afterwards made over to the tribe of Dan, Joshua xv. 33; xix. 41.—*Editor*.

¶ Joshua xix. 46.

can be no doubt, whatever may be the neglected state of the modern town, that the enterprise and vast resources of Solomon deepened and enlarged the harbour, and rendered it suitable for the admission of the trading vessels which, in furtherance of his splendid designs, discharged their cargoes at this place. It was at Joppa that the timber brought from Lebanon for Solomon's temple was landed. It was in a merchant ship that was leaving this port that the disobedient prophet Jonah took his passage for Tarshish, and here long after, in the first age of the Gospel, Peter restored Dorcas to life, and received the interesting message of Cornelius. During the last Jewish war, so fatal to the existence of that people, Joppa shared the fate of the capital, and never has regained its former grandeur, although in the time of the crusaders it was frequently contested as a place of importance,—in fact one of the keys to the Holy Land. In recent times its fame is connected with the movements of Bonaparte, its siege, capture, and the horrid massacre of the Turkish prisoners being well known incidents in the career of that extraordinary man. The modern town, which is situated on a tongue of the land that projects into the sea, is a mean, dull village, with mud walls and narrow streets. Although inconsiderable in extent, and destitute of interest itself, it commands the prospect of a rich and beautiful neighbourhood; its environs are laid out in gardens well stocked with every variety of fruit and vegetable produce, for which the light sandy soil is peculiarly adapted. The trade of the harbour consists in the importation of grain, especially rice from Egypt. The population is estimated at between 4000 and 5000; Dr Robinson says 7000 souls. Timnath, whither Judah was going to his sheep-shearers, when he met Tamar in disguise,* and whence Samson got his wife; no trace of it now remains.

* Genesis xxxviii. 12.

Zorah, the birth-place* of Samson. A town of this name was fortified by Rehoboam as a barrier city, but whether it was this town of Dan, or another elsewhere, cannot be ascertained. The canton of Dan, in consequence of a large portion of it continuing in the possession of the Philistines, being found too small for its population, 600 Danites, with their families, emigrated to the northern extremity of Palestine, attacked Laish, a Zidonian city near Lebanon, took possession of it, and changed its name to Dan.† This place is notorious in sacred history as the spot where Jeroboam established his golden calves,‡ and as the place which Nebuchadnezzar first seized on his invasion of Canaan.§

[Benjamin, the tribe of, was bounded on the north by Ephraim, on the east by the Jordan, on the south by Judah, on the west by Dan. In length this province is estimated at thirty-four miles, and its breadth at twenty. Like the canton of Dan, it has a beautiful variety of hill and valley, through which numerous streams meander, imparting a perennial freshness and fertility to the fields and gardens into which it was laid out, and in which were reared some of the most excellent fruits and valuable shrubs that Palestine produces. This tribe, before entering the promised land, was 45,600 strong.|| But in consequence of an unhappy league they afterwards formed with the Gibeonites, at which the rest of their brethren were highly displeased, hostilities were proclaimed against them; and in a battle with the allied army of the Israelites, this refractory tribe was almost annihilated,—600 only having escaped to tell their disaster.¶ Ehud the celebrated judge, and Saul the first king of Israel, were both natives of this tribe. On the revolt of the ten tribes, Benjamin preserved inviolate its fealty to Rehoboam, and continued, down to the Babylonish capti-

* Judges xlii. 2.

† 1 Kings xii. 29.

‡ Numbers xxvi. 41.

† Judges xviii.

§ Jeremiah iv. 15.

¶ Judges xx. 47.

vity, a constituent portion of the kingdom of Judah. On the close of that captivity, great numbers of the Benjamites returned along with the other tribes, and scattered themselves in Jerusalem and the adjoining cities, and patriotically shared in all the vicissitudes that chequered the declining age of the Jewish nation. The places of note in it were, Abel-mizraim, where the funeral cavalcade of Jacob halted, as a stage in their procession to Canaan;* Ai, the scene of Israel's disgraceful defeat, but afterwards stormed by them;† Anathoth, the city of Abiathar and Jeremiah;‡ Baaltamar, where the original inhabitants of Canaan worshipped Baal in a grove of palm-trees, and where the Benjamites were so dreadfully massacred;§ Bahurim, or Bachur, whither Michael was accompanied by Phaltiel, on her return to her legitimate husband David; where that aged monarch, in his flight from Absalom, was so cruelly insulted by Shimei, and where Ahimaaz and Jonathan lay concealed for a while in a well, in flying from Absalom's camp, as secret friends to the cause of royalty; Beer, sometimes called Beeroth, whither Jotham fled from the vengeance of Abimelech;|| Bethaven-Bethel, originally called Luz, from the abundance of almond-trees that flourished in that quarter, but its name was afterwards changed, in memory of the remarkable vision with which Jacob was favoured here;¶ on the division of the country by Joshua, it was originally assigned to the tribe of Ephraim, although it afterwards fell into the possession of the Benjamites, and as it was one of the places where Jeroboam erected his golden calves, it is called by Hosea 'the house of vanity';** Gibeah,†† Gibeon, famous as the place where the sun stood still in the days of Joshua,‡‡ as the scene of an engagement between the

* Genesis i. 11.

† 1 Kings ii. 26; Jeremiah i. 1.

‡ Judges ix. 21.

** Hosea x. 5 (in our version 'the glory is departed from it').

†† Judges xix. 16.

† Joshua vii.

§ Judges xx. 33.

¶ Genesis xxviii.

‡‡ Joshua x. 12.

partisans of David and Ishbosheth,* and for the death of Amasa by the treachery of Joab;† but far more than for all of these events, Gibeon is celebrated as the place where the tabernacle and brazen vessels were deposited, and remained after the removal of the ark to Jerusalem,‡ and where Solomon presented his solemn offering, and had his memorable vision;§ Gilgal, or the rolling, from the circumstance of the solemn renewal of the rite of circumcision there;|| at this place Joshua erected the twelve stones that were taken out of Jordan, to commemorate the miraculous passage, and afterwards pitched his camp;¶ at this place Saul was established as king, and afterwards solemnly rejected;** at this place the worship of the true God was celebrated in all its purity and spirituality in the days of Samuel;†† but it afterwards became infamous as a seat of idolatry.‡‡ Jericho, the city of palm-trees destroyed by Joshua,§§ and rebuilt by Hiel the Bethelite;|||| Michmash, famous for the gallant achievement of Jonathan;¶¶ Mizpah, where Saul was proclaimed king,*** and where Gedaliah resided and was assassinated.††† Nob, where the tabernacle was temporarily stationed, where David found an asylum and relief from the priests, and where those servants of God were barbarously murdered;‡‡‡ Zamaraim, where Jeroboam was defeated by Abijah.§§§

[Simeon, the tribe of, lay in the south-west extremity of Palestine, and was bounded on the north by the province of Dan, on the south by Idumea, on the east by Judah, and on the west by Philistia, as the Simeonites, like their immediate neighbours the Danites, did not

* 2 Samuel ii. 12-17.

† 1 Chron. xvi. 39.

‡ Joshua v. 9.

** 1 Samuel x. 1; xv.

†† Hosea iv. 15; Amos iv. 4, 5.

|| 1 Kings xvi. 34.

¶¶ 1 Samuel x. 17-24.

‡‡ 1 Samuel xxi. 1-6; xxii. 9-19.

† 2 Samuel xx. 10.

§ 2 Chron. i. 3-12.

¶ Josh. iv. 9; v. 10.

†† 1 Samuel xi. 15.

§§ Joshua vi.

¶¶ 1 Samuel xiv.

††† Jer. xl. 6; xli. 1-10.

§§§ 2 Chron. xiii.

finally expel the original inhabitants. The population of this tribe, immediately previous to their entering on the possession of the promised land, amounted to only 22,200,* the least of all the tribes of Israel; and this great diminution is perhaps to be traced to a great number of the Simeonites having fallen victims to the plague, which was commissioned to punish the guilt of Peor. The principal cities in this canton were Beersheba, or 'the well of the oath,' a name given to this place in memory of the alliance formed here between Abraham and Abimelech king of Gerar.† It was occasionally the residence, not of that patriarch only, but also of his son and grandson. Situated at the southern boundary of Palestine, it is frequently coupled with Dan, which, as already mentioned, stood at the northern extremity, as a proverbial expression for the whole land of Israel,‡ while a similar phrase, from 'Beersheba to Mount Ephraim,' is used to denote the whole extent of the kingdom of Judah.§ The position of Beersheba, as a border town, rendered it a place of considerable importance, both in the ancient times of Israel, and also during the wars of the crusaders. Hormah, originally called Zephath, the ancient capital of Arad,|| was at first assigned to Judah, but was afterwards ceded to the Simeonites.¶ To the elders of this city David despatched part of the booty taken from the Amalekites during their foray of Ziklag. Ziklag, like the preceding, from being a city of Judah, was made over to the tribe of Simeon.** The Philistines, however, continued long in undisputed possession of this, as of many other appropriated towns in this quarter, and it was not till the time of David that it was included in the kingdom of Israel, having been pre-

* Numbers xxvi. 14.

† Genesis xxi. 27.

‡ 2 Samuel xxiv. 2, 15.

§ 2 Chron. xix. 4.

|| Numb. xxi. 1. It was called Hormah, i.e. anathema, because the Israelites, by a solemn vow, doomed the city of King Arad to extermination, Judges i. 17; Josh. xii. 14.—*Editor*.

¶ Joshua xv. 30; xix. 4.

** Josh. xv. 31; xix. 5.

sented to that chief by Achish, king of Gath.* The Amalekites, in David's absence, reduced it to ashes. But a new city, of the same name, afterwards rose on the ruins of the old, and formed part of the small kingdom of Judah.

[Judah, the tribe of, the largest province in Palestine, was bounded on the north by Benjamin; on the east by the Dead Sea; on the south by Idumea; and on the west by Dan and Simeon; and comprehended a territory reaching about forty-six miles in length, and about fifty from east to west. This canton boasts of a greater variety of surface than perhaps any other district of the Holy Land. A range of mountains extended across the whole province in a north-easterly direction to the borders of the Dead Sea. This was the 'hill country' of Judah, amid the highland solitudes of which, however, many large tracts of the most fertile land were interspersed, which the indefatigable industry of the ancient Israelites kept in a high state of cultivation. Such was the beauty and productiveness of these elevated plains, that the estate of Caleb, as well as the Israelitish Goshen, and, at no great distance northwards, the rich meadows on which the numerous flocks of Nabal browsed, as well as the vineyards of Engedi, all lay in different parts of the 'hill country.' In short, lofty mountains, on which the light sandy soil was supported by terraces almost to the top, spacious plains, enriched with an infinite variety of springs, small lakes, and rivers, and adorned with luxuriant crops of grain, and extensive woods, —pastures in which grass of the loveliest verdure afforded an almost inexhaustible store of food to the grazier, and gardens redolent with fruit and flowers of every name, composed the beautifully variegated landscapes of Judah; a few bleak spots, such as at Maon, Ziph, Zin, valleys, which, in the language of the Hebrews, were called 'deserts,' but which, though

* 1 Samuel xxvii. 6.

inferior to the rest of the canton, contained too good pasturage to be considered barren wastes, were all that detracted from the general and extraordinary fertility of the country. Judah numbered before its settlement in Canaan, not less than 76,500 persons;* and to this tribe belonged the honour of taking, through the superior character of its people, the pre-eminence above their brethren,—of furnishing in the person of Othniel the first judge, and in that of David the most pious and patriotic king that ever swayed the sceptre of Israel.† As might be expected in so extensive and populous a province, there were a great many cities, the principal of which were, Anab, captured by Joshua, who also utterly exterminated its inhabitants, the Anakims.‡ Aphek, or Aphekah,§ chiefly celebrated as the scene of the Philistines' encampment, in the battle which issued in the capture of the ark;|| Azekah, where the five kings of the Amorites, with their confederate army, were overthrown by Joshua,¶ and where, afterwards, the Philistines were put to the rout on the fall of their vaunting champion Goliath;** Adullam, so distinguished for the beauty of its situation and the elegance of its buildings, that it was called 'the glory of Israel.'†† At the time of the invasion of Canaan it was reigned over by a king of its own, who fell before the victorious arms of Joshua;‡‡ Rehoboam enlarged and walled it with strong fortifications,§§ which, however, were unable to resist the attacks of the countless hosts of Sennacherib. In the neighbourhood of this town was a spacious cave in which David and his followers, to the number of four hundred, found an asylum.|||| Bethlehem, called Bethlehem of Judah, to distinguish it from a city of the same name in the tribe

* Numbers xxvi. 22.

† Joshua xi. 21.

‡ 1 Samuel iv.

** 1 Samuel xvii. 1.

‡‡ Joshua xii. 15.

|||| 1 Samuel xxii. 1.

† Judges iii. 9; 1 Sam. xvi.

§ Joshua xv. 53.

¶ Joshua x. 10; xv. 35.

||| Micah i. 15.

||| 2 Chron. xi. 7.

of Zebulun; and, anciently, Ephrath, or Ephratah, a village, paltry in appearance, but in celebrity second to none.* Here Rachel died, and her disconsolate husband long hovered about the spot, where the remains of his much loved partner were laid. At length, however, he tore himself away, after having perpetuated his tale of grief by the erection of a plain stone pillar; and although this simple memorial has long since perished amid the ravages of time, the false taste and superstition of later ages have erected a magnificent mausoleum surmounted by a Turkish dome, which is still shown as 'Rachel's tomb.' Here Naomi, and her excellent relative Boaz, spent their lives in the simplicity of rural life. Here the sweet singer of Israel first waked his lyre to Hebrew melodies,—and here an event occurred, which rendered this obscure village the most renowned spot upon earth,—David's Son, and David's Lord, was manifested in the flesh, as an infant of days.† Bethshemesh, where numbers of the people were miraculously struck dead as a punishment for their profane curiosity in looking into the ark, on its return from the country of the Philistines,—a public calamity which was commemorated by the erection of a gigantic stone, called Abel;‡ and where Amaziah was taken prisoner by the troops of Joash king of Israel.§ In the reign of Ahaz, this town fell into the hands of the Philistines.|| Carmel, on the mountain of that name, where Saul enjoyed a triumph after his victory

* Genesis xxxv. 16; Ruth i. 1; 1 Samuel xvi. 1-4; Micah v. 2; Matthew ii. 6.

† 'As we rode,' says Pliny Fisk, 'among the rocks and cliffs, reflecting how David here once tended his flocks, and learned to sing the praises of Jehovah, all at once a delightful valley, covered with green fields, opened to our view. Near one side of the plain is a field of olives, enclosed by a wall, with a subterranean church in the centre of it. This is pointed out as the very spot where the shepherds were when the angel announced to them our Saviour's birth.—*Editor*.

‡ 1 Samuel vi. 18;

§ 2 Chron. xxviii. 18.

§ 2 Chron. xxv. 23.

over Agag and his Amalekites; where, or at least at Maon, in the immediate vicinity, Nabal's property lay, and where Uzziah relieved the cares of empire amid the simple, and with him, favourite occupation of husbandry.* Debir, or, as it was formerly called, Kirjathsepher, and Kirjath-sannah, fell early before the march of Joshua, and was assigned by lot to Caleb. By some misfortune, it came again into the possession of the Canaanites, and that eminent chief having promised his daughter in marriage to the man who should dislodge the enemy, Othniel took it, and was rewarded for his gallant exploit with the hand of Achsah.† Engedi, whose more ancient name was Hazezon-tamar, was originally founded and occupied by the Amorites, from whom it was captured by the ambitious conqueror Chedorlaomer. Some commentators suppose that the name, Hazezon-tamar, was applied to it on account of the grove of palm-trees that environed it. But whatever truth or certainty there may be in this etymology, it was famous, in the time of Solomon, for the camphire, cypress, or, as some rather suppose, the balm, that was reared in its vineyards. The neighbourhood of this city abounds with spacious caverns, in one of which David, when pursued as an outlaw, and a price set on his head by the jealous Saul, evinced, by a singular rencounter with that implacable enemy, a magnanimity worthy of a great and good man.‡ Enrogel (*i.e.* the Fuller's fountain), in which Adonijah entertained his creatures, on the eve of his mad attempt to seize the crown.§ Ephes-dammim, the scene of the Philistines' encampment, where Goliath volunteered to be their champion, and of a signal defeat of the same restless enemy of Israel, by 'the mighty men of David.'|| Etam, between Bethlehem and Tekoah, was a fortified city in

* 1 Samuel xv. 12; xxv. 2; 2 Chron. xxvi. 10.

† Joshua xv. 15, 16, 49.

‡ Genesis xiv. 7; 1 Samuel xxiv.; 2 Chron. xx. 2; Song i. 14.

§ 1 Kings i. 9.

|| 1 Sam. xvii. 1; 1 Chron. xi. 18.

the days of Rehoboam.* Gederoth, which, lying on the south-east border of the Philistines' territory, was surprised and captured by that people in the reign of Ahaz.† Giloh, the birth-place of Ahithophel, and the scene of his suicide.‡ Hebron, originally called Kirjath-arba, or the city of Arba,—a great man among the Arabians,—was possessed by his family. It was a place of great antiquity ; for, according to Moses, it was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt, the royal city of the Pharaohs ; and was, by consequence, one of the oldest cities in the world. Hebron was situated in the heart of the mountains or hill country of Judah, on the ridge which runs south from Jerusalem. It became famous for the long residence of Abraham, and for being the cemetery of his family. In succeeding times, David established his court here during the first seven years of his reign ; and still farther, it claims the honour of being the birth-place of John the Baptist. Its name was probably derived from Hebron, one of the sons of Kohath, and grandson of Levi. Imbedded amongst a cluster of hills, in a deep and narrow valley, Hebron still retains many of its ancient features ; and the pools are still existing over which David hanged the murderers of his rival, Ishbosheth.§ Kadesh, or Kadesh-barnea, from which Moses despatched the spies to reconnoitre the promised land.|| Keilah, a city which, in the days of Saul, was saved by David from being plundered by the Philistines ; and yet, so little gratitude did the unprincipled inhabitants cherish towards their patriotic deliverer, that they would have

* 2 Chron. xi. 6.

† 2 Chron. xxviii. 18.

‡ 2 Samuel xv. 12; xvii. 23.

§ Genesis xxiii. 2; Num xiii. 22; Joshua xiv. 13; 2 Samuel iv. 12. 'The town or "cities of Hebron," as it is expressed in the original Scriptures, consists,' says Mr Monro, of a number of sheikdoms distinct from each other, standing at the foot of one of those hills that form a bowl round, and enclose it. This coincidence of polity, existing in ages so distant from each other, is very remarkable.—*Summer Ramble in Syria*, vol. i. p. 253.—*Editor*.

|| Numbers xiii. 3

betrayed him into the hands of Saul, but for his timely flight.* It was then inhabited chiefly by a small population, who earned a frugal livelihood from the cultivation of their fields. After the Babylonish captivity, it rose to be a flourishing and important city. Kirjathjearim, known also by the names of Kirjath-baal, or Baalah, lay on the skirts of a wood. In this city, the ark, after it was restored by the Philistines, remained for ninety years, until David removed it to Jerusalem.† The prophet Urijah was a native of this town.‡ Lachish, taken by Joshua, and fortified by Rehoboam, was the scene of Amaziah's death; and, on account of the inveterate idolatry of its people, was an object of the divine vengeance which was inflicted upon it successively by Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar.§ Libnah, the inhabitants of which revolted from Jehoram on account of murder and idolatry; and afterwards, in the reign of Hezekiah, sustained a long siege from the army of Sennacherib.|| Although it succeeded in defying the attempts of that haughty Assyrian, and maintaining its independence, it seems never to have recovered its former prosperity. Makkedah, where Joshua hanged Adoni-zedek, and four other confederate kings.¶ Mareshah, the scene of a great victory gained by Asa over Zerah the Ethiopian and 'his host, consisting of' a thousand thousand, 'and three hundred chariots.'** It shared the fate of the capital in the last Jewish war, being utterly destroyed, but long after the new and celebrated city Eleutheropolis is thought to have occupied its site. Tekoa, founded by Ashur, owes its chief celebrity to the circumstance of having been the birth-place of the prophet Amos. It was, besides, memorable for the dreadful slaughter of the Moabites, Amorites, and Idumeans, who had confede-

* 1 Samuel xxiii.

† 1 Samuel vii. 1; 1 Chron. xiii.

‡ Jeremiah xxvi. 20.

§ Joshua x. 5; 2 Kings xviii. 17; 2 Chron. xi. 9; Jer. xxxiv. 7.

|| 2 Kings viii. 22; Isaiah xxxvii. 8.

¶ Joshua x.

** 2 Chron. xiv. 9.

rated against Jehoshaphat; a widow of this city became a tool of Joab in bringing about the recall of Absalom from banishment. Rehoboam enlarged and fortified it; but it has long been a heap of ruins.* Telem, or Telaim, the place of rendezvous appointed by Saul for his militia to muster previous to their expedition against the Amalekites.† Ziph, the name of two cities in this tribe, the one of which stood on the border, close to Idumea, the other on a little eminence near Carmel.‡

[Reuben, § the tribe of, lay on the east of Jordan, and was bounded on the north by the province of Gad; on the south by the territories of Moab; on the east by those of Ammon; and on the west by the river Jordan. The district assigned to this tribe extended to about fifty miles from east to west, and to about thirty-eight from north to south. Its numbers, before entering on their possessions, amounted to 43,730; but although considerable both for numerical strength and the productiveness of their country, yet, according to the prediction respecting their ancestor, 'Thou shalt not excel,' no individual belonging to this tribe made any figure either in the civil or ecclesiastical history of Israel. Their situation on the borders of Moab and Ammon exposed them to frequent invasions from that quarter; and although, by their own prowess, and the aid of their brethren, they long succeeded in repelling their restless neighbours, their country at length fell a prey to those vigilant and rapacious enemies at the period of the general captivity of Israel in Babylon. The chief cities of Reuben were Abelshittim, at which the Israelites pitched their encampment, and by their

* 1 Chron. ii. 24; 2 Chron. xx. 20-24; 2 Sam. xiv.; 2 Chron. xi. 6; Amos i.

† 1 Samuel xv. 4.

‡ Joshua xv. 24.

§ At their own request, Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, were located on the east side of Jordan, on giving an express promise of assisting their brethren in subjugating the land of Canaan; Numbers xxxii. 1-5.—*Editor*.

familiar intercourse with the natives, so extensive a corruption in religion and manners spread through their ranks, that 24,000, through a divinely commissioned plague, perished in one day.* Adam, 'over against Jericho,' where the waters of Jordan 'stood and rose up upon an heap.'† Aroer, which was divided by the Arnon into two parts, one of its sections standing on the bank of that river, while the other was situated on an insulated eminence formed by its windings, and hence called 'the city in the midst of the river.'‡ Bethabara, or simply Bethbarah, *i. e.* 'the house of passage,' situated on a part of the river, where there was a ford, and a khan for the entertainment of travellers in their passage to and from the countries which the Jordan separated. At this place, Gideon stationed the Ephraimites to interrupt the flight of the Midianites, whose princes Oreb and Zeeb were overtaken here; and, at the same point, John the Baptist baptized the crowds who flocked to his ministry.§ Bezer, or Bozrah, situated in a barren district of country, whence it is called 'Bezer in the wilderness,'|| long continued in the possession of the Reubenites, but in the latter period of Israel's history, it was surprised and taken, first by the Moabites, and afterwards ravaged by the Chaldeans. It rose to considerable strength and importance in the reign of Trajan, who, after repairing and beautifying it, gave it the name of Philippopolis.¶ Heshbon, the ancient metropolis of the Amorites, and, consequently, the head quarters of the court of Sihon, whose haughty defiance in refusing to the Israelites a passage through his dominions, was severely punished by the loss of his capital, and several other cities, which surrendered to Moses, and were by him assigned to the Reubenites.** Heshbon, however, seems at a sub-

* Numb. xxv. ; xxxiii.

† Joshua iii. 16.

‡ Josh. xiii. 16; Deut. iv. 48.

§ Judges vii. 24; John i. 28.

|| Joshua xx. 8.

¶ Jeremiah xlviii. 24.

** Numbers xxi. 21; xxxii. ; Joshua xiii. 17.

sequent period to have partly belonged to the tribe of Gad.* In the later times of Israel, the Moabites seized it, and made it a tributary appendage of their kingdom; hence, it is frequently introduced into the prophetic denunciations of divine vengeance against that people.† This city suffered dreadfully during the Chaldean invasion of the Holy Land; nevertheless, it rose from its ashes, and seems to have been a flourishing and populous place in the time of Eusebius and Jerome, both of whom mention it under the name of Esbus. Nothing, either of the natural or artificial beauties of this city are mentioned in Scripture, except its fish pools.‡ Jahaz, or Jahaza, the first town of the Amorites on crossing the frontiers of Moab, and where, consequently, Sihon posted his army of resistance against the march of the Israelites.§ Kedemoth, on the eastern border of this tribe, the place whence Moses despatched an embassy to Sihon at Heshbon, requesting his permission of a free passage.|| Kirjathaim, one of the towns which Moses took and assigned to the Reubenites.¶ Medeba, the south-east extremity of the province.** Nebo, which stood at the foot of the mountain of the same name, fell subsequently into the power of the Moabites, and at a still later period was rendered almost a ruin by the ravages of the Assyrian invaders.†† Sibmah, near Heshbon, stood in a district which was celebrated for its vines, and the great quantity of wine sent from it through all the neighbouring country.‡‡ Like the last mentioned city, it fell latterly into the hands of the Moabites, and, like it too, suffered dreadfully from the Assyrians.

[Gad, the tribe of, was bounded on the north by the eastern half tribe of Manasseh, on the east by the territories of Ammon, on the south by Reuben, and on the

* Joshua xxi. 39.

† Isaiah xv.; xvi.; Jer. xlviii.; xlix.

‡ Song vii. 4.

§ Numbers xxi. 23.

|| Joshua xiii. 18; xxi. 37; Deut. ii. 26.

¶ Numb. xxxii. 37.

** Joshua xiii. 16.

†† Isa. xv. 2; xlvii.; Jer. xlviii. 1.

‡‡ Isa. xvi. 8; Jer. xlviii. 32.

west by the Jordan, and it comprised a district extending forty-four miles from east to west, and varying at different points between thirty to fourteen from north to south. Before they entered on their settlements, this tribe numbered 40,500, and they were highly favoured in obtaining as their portion a rich and beautifully diversified tract of land, whose natural fertility was greatly aided by the Jabbok and its numerous tributaries, while abundance of pasturage was at all times supplied on the sides of Gilead, which extended in a continuous range through the whole province from north to south. The chief cities of Gad were Aroer on the banks of the Arnon.* Bether, which was probably the same as Bithron, so called from a word signifying *divisions*, as this place, to use the words of Dr Gill, was parted or divided from Judea by the Jordan.† Debir, or as it is occasionally called Lodebar, where Mephibosheth was brought up in early years in the house of Machir, a devoted adherent of the house of Saul.‡ Dibon, on the frontiers of Gad, originally assigned to the Reubenites, but by them exchanged for some other place with their northern brethren.§ In later times it fell into the hands of the Moabites, and was annihilated in the Assyrian invasion. Jazer,|| near the southern boundary of the province, on a 'sea' or lake of the same name, which flows by a small outlet at its western corner into the Jordan. Jogbehah,¶ famous as the place where Gideon surprised and completely routed the Midianitish army. Mahanaim, on the banks of the Jabbok, which derived its name from Jacob, who there saw 'two camps of angels, which he called God's host.' During the short reign of Ishbosheth, that prince established his court in the town; David also sought refuge here, and from the

* Joshua xiii. 16; Deut. iv. 48; Judges xi. 33.

† 2 Sam. ii. 29.

‡ Joshua xiii. 26; 2 Sam. ix. 4.

§ Joshua xiii. 9; Numbers xxxii. 34; Jer. xlviii. 18.

¶ Jer. xlviii. 32.

¶ Num. xxxii. 35; Judges viii. 11.

windows of the castle looked out with intense anxiety for tidings of the issue of the battle between the royalist troops and those of Absalom.* Minnith, celebrated for its wheat.† Mizpeh, likewise on the Jabbok, had this name given to it in commemoration of the amicable compact entered into by Jacob and Laban, and hence the whole region from this town as far north as Hermon, was called 'the land of Mizpeh.' Here Jephthah resided, and mustered his troops against the Ammonites. Here Saul was proclaimed king. Here, long after, David provided an asylum for his parents, while he himself was outlawed by Saul, and all his relations were in jeopardy on his account.‡ Peniel, or Penuel, received this designation from Jacob, who wrestled here with the angel, and prevailed; and when on this solitary and uninhabited spot a city afterwards rose, the name was continued in memory of that remarkable event. It was afterwards fortified by the erection of a town, which, as a place of considerable strength, became the pride of its inhabitants; till, in consequence of their refusal to provide any refreshment to the exhausted troops of Gideon, that renowned leader, on his return from the pursuit, laid the citadel in ruins. From whatever cause, this town had been greatly reduced, until the active mind of Jeroboam caused it to be rebuilt.§ Ramoth-Gilead, having been surprised and captured by the Syrians, was invested by Ahab king of Israel, and Jehoshaphat king of Judah,—an alliance which provoked the divine displeasure; and it was in a sally of the besieged, that Ahab, who had disguised himself, was mortally wounded. This city suffered on account of the obstinate idolatry of its inhabitants. It was here that Jehu was anointed king.|| Succoth,

* Gen. xxxii. 2; 2 Sam. ii. 8; xvii.; xviii. † Ezek. xxvii. 17.

‡ Genesis xxxi. 49; Judges xi. 11; 1 Samuel x. 17; xxii. 3.

§ Genesis xxxii. 30; Judges viii. 17; 1 Kings xii. 25.

|| 2 Chron. xviii. 3; Hosea vi. 8; xii. 11; 2 Kings ix. 1-10.

the name given to the place where Jacob, on his return from Mesopotamia, pitched his succoth or tents, and which was perpetuated in the city that was afterwards built on that site. The elders of this town were subjected to horrible tortures by Gideon, in revenge for their inhospitable treatment of his exhausted troops. This city stood in a valley, in which Hiram cast the huge brazen vessels that were designed for Solomon's temple.*

[Manasseh, east half tribe of, possessed a territory, bounded on the north by Syria, on the east by Arabia, on the south by Gad, and on the west by the Jordan and the lake of Gennesareth, and extending about fifty miles in length. The rich pasture-lands of Bashan and Gilead were included within these limits; and the whole province, except a few bleak and rocky spots, consisted of strong and fertile soil. Its chief cities were, Argob, the capital of a district in Bashan of the same name, which, together with other fifty-nine cities in the same province, originally belonged to Og, and were conspicuous for their lofty and fortified walls.† Ashtaroth-carnaim, situated also in Bashan, was the ancient residence of Og, and so called from Astarte, or Ashtaroth, the tutelary goddess of the Syrians, who, like the Egyptian Isis, was represented with two horns on her forehead, like a crescent; whence the epithet *carnaim*, which signifies horns.‡ Camon,§ Edrei,|| Golan, or Gaulan, which gave the name of Gaulonitis to a large district, in the lower part of which are the celebrated ruins of Gamala and Julias. Geshur, the original inhabitants of which having not been extirpated, were brought into subjection by the energy of Jair. For a long time, however, it was ruled by native princes, one of whom, Talmai, was father-in-law to David, and grandfather of Absalom, at whose court

* Genesis xxxiii. 17; Judges viii. 16; Psalm lx. 6; 1 Kings vii. 46.

† Deut. iii. 4, 14: see also 1 Kings iv. 13.

‡ Deut. i. 4.

§ Judges x. 5.

|| Num. xxi. 33.

that profligate prince sought protection after the murder of his brother.* Havoth-jair, a cluster of about sixty cities, which Jair took from the Amorites, lying in a part of Gilead, which afterwards received the name of Batanea.† Jabesh-Gilead is famous in sacred history for several incidents. Its inhabitants, with the exception of 400 young women, were dreadfully massacred for refusing to join the confederate army which was marched to take vengeance on the Benjamites for the crime at Gibeah. The people of this place, about a century after, were besieged by Nahash, and while that haughty Amorite would listen to no terms, Saul signalized himself in the beginning of his reign by the rigorous measures he adopted for its relief. Kenath, called also Nobah, after the gallant Manassite who wrested it from the aboriginal inhabitants, is noted as the place where Zeba and Zalmunna, the princes of Moab, fell into the hands of Gideon.‡ Rogelim, the residence of Barzillai.§ Salchah.|| Tishbe, the birth-place of Elijah.

[Levi, the tribe of, had no separate inheritance, nor peculiar locality apportioned to it.¶] The massacre at Shechem, with the guilt of which, Levi was stained in common with his brother Simeon, was the occasion, according to the prophetic declaration of their dying father, of his being destined to be dispersed in Israel. The unswerving fidelity of this tribe, however, when the rest of their brethren joined the idolatry of the golden calf, was rewarded by the special favour of God, in their being advanced to the privileges of the eldest, and that of being the priests of the whole nation, whether in the capacity of official servants of God, or instructors and judges of the people. In furtherance of these public objects, they were interspersed through

* 2 Samuel xiii. 37; 1 Chron. ii. 23.

† Joshua xiii. 30.

‡ 2 Samuel xvii. 27.

¶ Deut. x. 8, 9.

§ Judges viii. 11.

|| Deut. iii. 10; Josh. xii. 5.

the whole land, having certain places assigned for their residence, with the grounds adjacent as their glebelands, eight in Judah, four in Benjamin, one in Simeon, and four in each of the other tribes, and the tithes and first fruits of the lands of their brethren allotted for their maintenance, so that they were entirely free from the incumbrance of secular cares. The number of cities occupied exclusively by them, whence they were called Levitical cities, was forty-eight, and it was so ordered by the unerring providence of their divine lawgiver, that the greater proportion of these cities lay within the territories of Judah and Benjamin,—a provision, the admirable wisdom and propriety of which was fully manifested on the schism that took place in the reign of Rehoboam. For the great influx of pious Israelites from all parts of the land that emigrated at that time to the two faithful tribes, would, if the ministers of religion had been dispersed indiscriminately, have occasioned an inadequate supply of priests, or have burdened the small kingdom of Judah with the maintenance of a greater number of that order who refused to comply with the idolatrous innovations of Jeroboam, than its resources were able to support. These cities were divided among the families of Levi in the following manner:—twenty-three among the Kohathites, thirteen among the Gershonites, and twelve among the Merarites, and six of these were set apart as cities of refuge.

[Six cities—three on the east and three on the west side of Jordan—were called ‘cities of refuge,’ being appointed by Moses to afford sanctuaries to the homicide from the vengeance of the relatives of a deceased person, until the local authorities should have investigated the case and ascertained whether his death was the result of accident or premeditated malice. To facilitate his flight, they all stood on a conspicuous place. No river intervened, the roads that led to them were commanded to be kept in good repair, and as

they were all situated in open plains, the manslayer had no steep, circuitous, or upland path to retard his movements. Kedesh stood in the plain of Zaanaim;* Hebron in a level desert; Sychem in the plains of Moreh; Golan and Ramoth-Gilead at the foot of their respective range of hills. In the neighbourhood of each of these, except Bezer, which itself was an eminence, rose a lofty peak, which was a prominent object in the distance, and enabled the fugitive, with unerring certainty, to direct his course. The hill of Naphthali stood by Kedesh; Gerizzim by Sychem; the hills of Bashan by Golan; Gilead by Ramoth-Gilead; and the terraced eminences of Hebron were objects visible from afar.

[All these minute and careful arrangements for the sure and speedy flight of the man-slayer to the city of refuge,—the conspicuous eminence of its own situation, the absence of rivers and every kind of obstruction, and the plain level road that led to it, while they formed in the first instance a provision of the criminal law of the Hebrews, necessary in the circumstances of that people, were designed also typically to point out the sinner's way to Christ. No rivers roll to retard his progress, no mountains raise a barrier to intercept his view; the new and living way is perfectly patent, while, from the first moment that he turns his face thitherward, the cross, that surmounts Calvary, the true place of refuge, appears in full view. It is to the asylum afforded by these cities from the vengeance of the Göel, or blood-avenger, and the breathless haste with which the trembling fugitive would grasp the walls, that the apostle alludes in the beautiful passage where he speaks of 'those who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.'†]

[*Division during the administration of Solomon.*—Without disturbing the original settlements of Joshua, Solomon, whose extraordinary political wisdom consoli-

* Joshua xix. 37; Judges iv. 11.

† Hebrews vi. 18.

dated the vast empire which reached to the Euphrates on the east, the Mediterranean on the west, and Egypt on the south, and included Syria, Damascus, Ammon, and Moab, divided his kingdom into twelve provinces, over which he appointed twelve presiding officers.* The chief object of this new arrangement was to ensure the due and regular administration of justice, to facilitate the collection of the public revenue, and to superintend the supply of provisions for the royal household, which each of the twelve districts were required to furnish annually, that is for a month in rotation.

[*Division in the reign of Rehoboam.*—Another and more important division of the land of Israel took place under the son and successor of Solomon, when ten tribes, having revolted, erected themselves into a separate and independent state under Jeroboam. The rebels included all the northern and middle parts of the country, and constituted what was known in after times as the kingdom of Israel, while the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, together with those portions of Dan and Simeon that were intermingled with them, remained steadfast in their allegiance to Rehoboam, and formed the comparatively small and weak kingdom of Judah.† The whole population of the ten tribes, however, did not unanimously submit to the yoke of the usurper Jeroboam; for as, in furtherance of his ambitious designs, with the view of eradicating the ancient religious associations of the people, he established and zealously patronised idolatry throughout his dominions, the Levites, and all the more pious portion of the inhabitants in that part of the land, removed to the kingdom of Judah to enjoy the benefit of pure ordinances at Jerusalem.‡ The capital of the kingdom of Judah was Jerusalem; while that of Israel was at first Shechem, afterwards Tirzah, and

* 1 Kings iv. 7-19.

† 1 Kings xi. 12; xii. 21; 2 Chron. xi. 10-12.

‡ 1 Kings xii. 17; 2 Chron. xi. 13-17.

latterly, in the reign of Omri, who purchased the hill of Samaria, and built a city which was enlarged and beautified by his royal successors, the honour of being the chief city in the new kingdom, was transferred to Samaria, situated about thirty miles north-east of Jerusalem. The nineteen princes who swayed the sceptre of Israel, though all of different lines, inherited the apostate principles of Jeroboam, and were zealous patrons of idolatry in their dominions,* as well as infamous for their personal crimes. The polluted character of the court demoralized the whole nation, which, after subsisting 254 years, was by the judgment of an angry Providence carried into captivity by Shalmanezzer,† and distributed along the shores of the Caspian Sea, in the northern region of Assyria.

[The separate kingdom of Judah enjoyed a considerably longer existence. Of its nineteen kings, all, with the single exception of Athaliah, who usurped the throne for seven years,‡ belonged to the house of David; and while four of these, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, and Josiah, were men of exemplary piety, and other four, Joash, Amaziah, Uzziah, and Jotham, showed a strong disposition to use their influence in support of religion, the remaining eleven were persons of flagitious characters, who both sinned themselves, and led their subjects to sin; so that this kingdom also gradually declined, and after a duration of 388 years, it was subdued, and its inhabitants carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar successively in the first, eighth, and nineteenth years of his reign. The first captivity began in the year 606, the second 598, the third 587, before the christian era; and as the whole period of the captivity lasted for seventy years, reckoning from the first invasion of the king of Babylon, the restoration of the exiles to the land of their fathers did not take place till the year 536 B. C.§

* 1 Kings xii. 26-33.

† 2 Kings xvii. 31-8.

‡ 2 Kings xi. 1-3.

§ 2 Chron. xxxvi. 21; Jer. xxix. 10-14.

[The Holy Land successively fell into the hands of the Greeks, Syrians, Maccabees (who were native princes), and Romans, by a series of revolutions, extending over several centuries, but of which, although forming a most interesting chapter in ancient history, our limits will not admit of our attempting even a sketch; and therefore we proceed at once to consider Palestine in the time of our Lord, when the Romans, to whom it had become tributary, divided it into those five provinces, Galilee, Samaria, Judea, Perea, and Idumea.

[*Division in the time of our Lord.*—1. Galilee comprehended the territories anciently possessed by the tribes of Asher, Naphthali, Issachar, and Zebulun. Josephus subdivides this district into Upper and Lower Galilee. In the former, which obtained its designation from the mountainous ridges which intersected it, a large proportion of the inhabitants were of foreign extraction, who had emigrated thither for the purposes of trade and commerce, in consequence of which it is sometimes called ‘Galilee of the Gentiles,’ or ‘nations,’ and at other times ‘the coasts of Tyre and Sidon.’* Lower Galilee included that portion of the northern province which lay directly between the lake of Gennesareth and the Mediterranean, a rich and well cultivated country, and thickly studded with cities, towns, and villages.† In consequence of its great population, as well as from its being beyond the immediate presence and power of the priests, this canton was chosen by Christ as the principal and favourite scene of his ministry. The great influx of foreigners into this part of the country introduced a most vitiated dialect, insomuch that the inhabitants were noted for their strange peculiarities in language, of which a memorable instance occurs in the history of Peter, whose

* Isaiah ix. 1; Matthew iv. 15; Mark vii. 31.

† Josephus says it contained within its narrow limits more than 200.—*Editor.*

Galilean tongue rendered fruitless all his efforts to conceal his connexion with Jesus.

[The Galileans are described by Josephus as being strongly imbued with the spirit of disaffection to the Roman government. Nowhere were demagogues more successful in sowing the seeds of sedition, and at no time were occasions leading to popular outbreaks more frequent, than during the administration of Pilate, whose partial and vacillating government rendered him extremely obnoxious. One of those insurrections the procurator had avenged with indecent haste, by treacherously slaying some natives of this province, during their sojourn in Jerusalem, at one of the religious festivals ; and as the apprehension of Jesus, on a charge of teaching sedition, occurred shortly after on the eve of a similar solemnity, the knowledge of the turbulent character of the Galileans, and the recent disturbances which he had found it necessary to suppress in so summary a way, give singular significance to that part of the proceedings in the judgment-hall, where Pilate asked ‘ whether the man were a Galilean.’* The towns belonging to this province mentioned in the gospel history are chiefly these, — Bethsaida, now Sheikh Said, situated on the north-west angle of the lake of Gennesareth, not far from the point where the Jordan pours its waters into that inland sea, was a small village, whence our Lord chose three of his disciples, and where he gave several miraculous attestations of his character and ministry ; notwithstanding which, the inhabitants remained in obstinate unbelief, and became in consequence the subjects of a prophetic denunciation, which not long after was carried into complete execution ; that city having been one of the first to suffer the ravages of the Roman army. Never since has it recovered that disaster ; a few paltry cottages, and a heap of ruins, being all that remain to mark the site of this once flourishing place.†

* Luke xxiii. 6.

† Matt. xi. 21 ; Mark viii. 22 ; John i. 44.

[Cana was a town situated on the brow of an eminence, and it is a beautiful instance of the minute accuracy of the sacred writer, that our Lord is twice said to have gone *down* thence to Capernaum. Monkish traditions have long fixed the site of this village about six miles north of Nazareth, where stands the present Kafr Kenna. Older writers unanimously placed it at Kâna-el-Jélil, a little westward of Capernaum; and Dr Robinson thinks the evidence is conclusive in favour of the latter being the Cana of the gospel history. Nathaniel was a native of this village, and our Lord performed his first miracle here.* ‘While walking along,’ says Dr Clarke, ‘we saw large massy stone water-pots, answering the description given of the ancient vessels of the country by John; not preserved nor exhibited as relics, but lying about disregarded by the present inhabitants, who were unacquainted with their original use. From their appearance, and the number of them, it was quite evident that the practice of keeping water in large stone pots, each holding from eighteen to twenty gallons, was once common in the country. About a quarter of a mile from Cana, is a spring of a delicious limpid water, whence all the water is taken for the supply of the village. It is usual for pilgrims to halt at this spring, as the source of the water which our Saviour converted into wine.’ These remarks of Dr Clarke, however, refer to the supposed Cana near Nazareth.

[Capernaum lay also on the north-west coast of the sea of Tiberias, in the spacious and fertile plain called the land of Gennesareth, now *El-Guheir*. At this city our Lord resided so much, and within its walls, or in its immediate neighbourhood, delivered so many of his most impressive discourses, and wrought such a variety of miracles, that it is called ‘his own city.’ In consequence of the rare privileges it possessed by the resi-

* It is called Cana of Galilee to distinguish it from another Cana in the tribe of Asher. John ii. 11; iv. 46.—*Editor*.

dence of the Saviour, it 'was exalted to heaven,' *i. e.* enjoyed a pre-eminence above all other cities. But continuing insensible to the extraordinary tokens he gave them of more than mortal power and benevolence, their obduracy was threatened with a proportionate severity of punishment,—'it should be brought low;' and so great has the humiliation been, that its site cannot be easily ascertained, and even its very name has perished. Most travellers have fixed it, on the authority of tradition, at Tel-hûm. Dr Robinson, rightly judging this locality to be too distant from the shore, has, for this and other weighty reasons, concluded it to have stood at Khân Miniyeh. But these discrepancies only show how completely the prophecy has been fulfilled.* Chorazin, along the shores of the lake of Gennesareth, about two Roman miles, according to Josephus, from Capernaum, a small town which formerly equalled that city in religious privileges, and for similar unbelief now shares its doom.

[Dalmanutha, a city in the same neighbourhood, but no trace of it exists. Magdala stood near it,—the city of Mary Magdalene, which, like all in its vicinity, has disappeared. Cesarea (of Palestine), formerly called the Tower of Strato, stood at an equal distance of thirty miles from the towns of Ptolemais and Joppa. The convenience of its situation attracted the attention of Herod, who, in continual fear of a revolt of his subjects, built a strong fortress here. The city itself he enlarged and embellished in the most magnificent style, and of the costliest materials, erecting all the edifices, not only his own palace and other public buildings, but private houses, of marble; and perceiving the great convenience of its situation as a harbour, constructed a port 'equal in size to the Piræus of Athens,'—furnished it with towers raised in the sea, upon one side of a semicircular mole, the most splendid of which

* Matthew iv. 13; viii. 5; ix. 1; xl. 23; xvii. 24-27.

bore the name of Drusus, the adopted son of the emperor; the foundation stones of the mole being fifty feet long by eighteen wide and nine thick. Around the port was a series of buildings of the costliest marble; and in the centre, upon a mound, stood a temple of Cesar. It was here, during the festival celebrated every five years in honour of the emperor, that Herod Agrippa, for his pride in allowing the venal crowd to extol him as a god, was smitten by the angel with a mortal disease. It was here that Cornelius resided and received the ministrations of Peter, and it was here that Paul lay a prisoner for two years, in the course of which he made his noble speech before Festus.* ‘Those palaces which heretofore were the resort of emperors—those courts which rested upon marble and glistened with gold, echoing with the revelry of princes,—the theatres,—the forums,—the temples, are now furrowed by the plough, or grazed upon by the beasts of the field. Imagination, still dwelling on the busy streets and stately colonnades, still inquires, Where is Cesarea?’†

[Nain, on the banks of the Kishon, in the plain of Esdraelon, a few miles south of Tabor, was the scene of an affecting incident in the history of our Lord,—his restoration of the widow’s son. It is still a hamlet consisting of a few huts.

[Nazareth was situated about six miles west of Mount Tabor, on the brow of a hill, which commands the prospect of the beautiful and fertile vale of the same name. This town had the honour of being the residence of Joseph and Mary, and of our Lord himself during the first thirty years of his life. The hill on which the town stands, terminates at several points in abrupt precipices, having the appearance of perpendicular walls forty or fifty feet high, from one of which the wicked inhabitants endeavoured, on one occasion, to

* Acts xii. 23; x.; xxv.

† Monro’s Summer Ramble in Syria, vol. i. p. 71.

cast down Jesus. Although a small place, its population amounting to scarcely three thousand persons, it was early decorated with an elegant church, and has been reckoned one of the favourite objects of interest to pilgrims.

[Tiberias, now Tabaria, lay on the south-west corner of the lake of Gennesareth. It was built by Herod Agrippa, and called by him after the emperor Tiberias. Great privileges were conferred upon the inhabitants of this town,—a circumstance which naturally led to an influx of inhabitants. The bestowment of these immunities was an artful stroke of policy to subdue the prejudices of the Jews, who were strongly averse to reside in it on account of the numerous sepulchres that covered the adjoining grounds, and would have produced ceremonial pollution. The expedient was so successful, that Tiberias speedily rose to be a considerable town, and ultimately to become the metropolis of Galilee; although a well fortified place, and long defended with great gallantry by Josephus, it surrendered to Vespasian, and was laid in ruins. After the downfall of Jerusalem, it became the chief seat of the Jewish doctors. The Sanhedrim held its last session in this city. The collection of traditions called the Talmud was made there; and down to the present day, it has contained more learned Jews than any other place in Palestine. What perhaps contributed chiefly to the increase of the city in ancient times, and still leads great numbers of people to it at certain seasons, is its hot baths, which are reputed to be of great efficacy in cases of gout and rheumatism. It is mentioned only once in the gospel history.*

[2. Samaria comprehended the territory formerly assigned to Ephraim and Manasseh, and it was situated so exactly in the centre of the country between Judea and Galilee, that to a person passing from the one pro-

* John vi. 23.

vince to the other, the direct road was through this district,—a fact which, when known, affords a satisfactory explanation of that passage in the gospel of John, where it is said of our Lord in travelling to Jerusalem, ‘he must needs pass through Samaria.’* It was inhabited by the posterity of the colonists whom the Babylonish monarch brought from the east country to form a settlement in those parts of the Holy Land, whence the ten tribes were withdrawn.† The language, manners, and above all, the religion of the new settlers was of a mongrel character, made up of a mixture of their own native customs and opinions with those of their neighbours in their adopted country. The priest whom Nehemiah banished took refuge with Sanballat, governor of the Samaritans, and obtained his daughter in marriage. Through his influence and on his account Sanballat is thought to have built a temple in Mount Gerizim, which long after was laid in ruins by the Asmonean princes; but the Samaritans, influenced by ancient predilection, still continued to worship on that mountain, admitting no other books of Scripture than the law of Moses. The knowledge of both these circumstances will sufficiently explain the cause of that inveterate hostility which the Jews cherished towards the Samaritans. Its chief towns were Samaria, Sychem or Sychar, and Antipatris, which stood in a beautiful vale on the road from Jerusalem to Cesarea, about eighteen miles from Joppa. Its original name was Capher-saba, but Herod the Great changed it to Antipatris in honour of his father, Antipater. Paul and his military escort halted at this city on their midnight march to Cesarea.‡

[3. Judea, the most important province, comprising the ancient kingdom of Judah, or all the territory that was included in the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, Simeon, and Dan. Its towns of chief interest men-

* John iv. 4.

† 2 Kings xvii. 24.

‡ Acts xxiii. 31.

tioned in the New Testament, were Arimathea, the ancient Ramah, now Ramleh, the native city of Joseph the counsellor, who so respectfully paid the rites of burial to the corpse of Jesus. It continued a populous and flourishing town till the time of the crusaders, when it was amongst the first towns to fall before the sword of those invaders. Its inhabitants abandoned it in the night, and the European warriors, on discovering the fact, took possession of the place, and gave themselves up for several days to unrestrained revelry in the deserted houses. It is a paltry place, though it has acquired some local distinction by being chosen as the residence of the Aga of Gaza.

[Azotus or Ashdod, may be described as on the coast of the Mediterranean, only a few miles inland, exactly twelve miles south of Joppa. It was the place where Philip the evangelist was led by the Spirit after baptizing the Ethiopian eunuch. 'It is now,' says Fisk, 'an inconsiderable village, called by the Turks Esdood, and consists of 100 or 150 miserable cabins or holes, built of stone covered with branches of trees and roots, and these again with earth, so that vegetation appears every where on the top of them.'

[Bethany, a small hamlet, situated on the eastern base of the mount of Olives, the well-known residence of Lazarus and his sisters, and consequently the scene of several of the most interesting events in the gospel history.* It consists at present only of about thirty or forty houses; the site, however, is romantic.

[Bethlehem, called Bethlehem of Judah or Ephratah, to distinguish it from another town of the same name in the north-west of the country, lay on the brow of a mountain six miles from Jerusalem on the Gaza road. Its great celebrity among Christians is grounded on its being the birth-place of the Saviour of the world; and the memory of that extraordinary event has, of course, made it the resort of pilgrims in all ages. A

* John xi.; Luke xxiv. 50.

convent was built by the empress Helena over the supposed site of the stable where the holy child first saw the light ; and the credulous or designing monks point out, with an affectation of circumstantial minuteness, every spot connected with the infancy of Jesus. It is needless to say, that all their mummeries must tend greatly to disturb every emotion of real piety and reverence which the place may inspire. According to Buckingham, about 1000 inhabitants, almost all of whom are Christians, occupy this town ; but, according to Richardson's estimate, they do not exceed 300. It has a miserable appearance, the houses being mere hovels, and the people naked and half starved.

[Bethphage, in the immediate neighbourhood of Bethany, about two miles from Jerusalem, where our Lord found the ass on which he made his triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

[Emmaus, so called from some celebrated baths in its neighbourhood, was the village where our Lord, assuming the appearance of a stranger, had an interesting interview with two of his disciples after his resurrection.

[Gaza, lying on the Mediterranean, was the frontier town of Palestine on the side of Egypt, and was consequently a strongly fortified place, as its name 'the strong,' imports. In the gospel history it is mentioned in connexion with the interview of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch, where it is described as 'desert.' Gaza was then a flourishing town ; and, therefore, the expression of the sacred historian, in the opinion of Dr Robinson, is more properly to be referred to the particular road from Jerusalem to Gaza on which the evangelist was to find the eunuch, viz. the southern road leading from Eleutheropolis to Gaza through 'the desert,' or region without villages, as is the case at the present day.

[Jericho, formerly described.

[Joppa, famous as the place where Peter was fa-

voured with the vision of clean and unclean meats, where he restored Dorcas, and entertained the messengers of Cornelius.

[Lydda, where Peter cured Eneas.*]

The capital city of this province, and of the whole country, was originally called Jebus, in honour of its venerable founder; a name which it afterwards exchanged for Jerusalem, one of the most celebrated in the records of history. These facts are explicitly stated by the inspired writer:—‘And David and all Israel went to Jerusalem, which is Jebus; where the Jebusites were, the inhabitants of the land.’† This city is first mentioned in Scripture under the name of Salem, which is, by interpretation, Peace; the capital of the kingdom over which Melchizedek reigned. The name by which it was afterwards known seems to be compounded of both Jebus and Salem, and to have been originally written Jebussalem, but for the sake of the sound afterwards softened into Jerusalem. In Hebrew the word assumes the dual form, and is commonly read Jerusalaïm; probably to denote, that the city consisted of two parts, of which one was the old city, where Melchizedek and the Jebusites dwelt; and the other the new city built by David and his successors on the throne of Israel and Judah, which for its extent might be regarded as a new city, or new Jerusalem.

The old city founded by the Jebusites before Abraham arrived in Canaan, is styled by some writers *the city of Melchizedek*, not because he was the founder, but because it was the seat of his government. This ancient city was so strongly fortified both by nature and art, that the people of Israel could not drive out the Jebusites, its original inhabitants, but were reduced to live with them at Jerusalem. The armies of Israel indeed seized the city; but the Jebusites kept possession of the strong fort which defended the town, till the reign of David, who took it by storm, and changed its

* Acts ix. 32. † 1 Chron. xi. 4; Bochart. Phaleg. lib. iv. p. 30.

name to 'the city of David,' to signify the importance of the conquest, and to perpetuate the memory of the event. Having chosen Jerusalem for the place of his residence and the capital of his kingdom, he adorned the fortress with a royal palace for his own accommodation, and a variety of other buildings; which, from the continual additions made to them in succeeding reigns, increased to the size of a considerable city, and covered nearly the whole of mount Zion. [The city in the height of its glory was spread over four hills, viz. Moriah on the east, Acra on the north-west, Zion on the south-west, and Bezetha on the north-east; or, to be more particular, 'it was originally built,' to use the words of Josephus, 'on two hills, Moriah and Zion, which are opposite to each other, having a valley to divide them asunder; at which valley the corresponding rows of houses on both hills terminate. Of these hills, that which contains the upper city is much higher, and in length more direct. Accordingly, it was called 'the citadel' by David; but by us it is called the 'upper market place.' But the other hill, which is called Acra, and sustains the lower city, is of the shape of the moon when she is horned; over against this, there was a third hill, but naturally lower than Acra, and parted formerly from the other by a broad valley. In the time when the Asmoneans reigned they filled up that valley with earth, and had a mind to join the city to the temple. Now, the valley of the cheesemongers, as it was called, was that which distinguished the hill of the upper city from that of the lower, and extended as far as Siloam. On the outside, these hills are surrounded by deep valleys, and by reason of the precipices belonging to them on both sides, are everywhere impassable. As the city grew more populous, it gradually extended beyond its old limits, and those parts of it that stood northward of the temple and joined that hill to the city, made it considerably larger, and occasioned that hill, which is in number the fourth

and called Bezetha, to be inhabited also. It lies over against the Antonia, but is divided from it by a deep valley, which was dug on purpose.'] The largeness of the city of David may be inferred from the expression of the sacred historian :—' David built round about, from Millo and inward.'*

[For beauty and splendour this city was the wonder and admiration of the world. It would require volumes to describe the magnificent buildings and works with which from the time of Solomon downwards Jerusalem was enlarged and ornamented, as well as to narrate the strangely checquered story of her prosperity and numerous disasters, extending over so many centuries.

[But what gives to this city its chief interest and importance in the eyes of Christians, is neither the beauty and spaciousness of its streets, the splendour of its buildings, nor the greatness of its vicissitudes; but its being the asylum of the true religion when it was banished from every other spot on the earth; the place which the Lord himself 'chose to put his name there;' where some of the most memorable communications from heaven were made to man; which was honoured as the residence of prophets and apostles; above all, which was hallowed by the footsteps, and associated with the ministry, of the Saviour of men; and the name of which, in short, for a long succession of ages, is inter-

* Millo seems to have been a senate-house, in one of whose apartments the council of state met to deliberate upon public affairs, and another portion of which was occupied as an armoury. The language of the sacred historian must be understood as used proleptically, for Millo was built not by David but Solomon. It stood on the north-east side of mount Zion, at the upper end of the noble and magnificent causeway and terraces, which led down to Silla and the royal palace on the opposite side. When, therefore, the sacred historian says, David built round about from Millo and inward, or, as the original words may be rendered 'from Millo to the house,' he seems to intimate that David built round about from the place where the senate-house stood to his own house; in other words, that David built from one side of mount Zion quite round to the opposite point. 2 Samuel v. 9; 1 Kings ix. 15; x. 4, 5; 2 Kings xii. 20; 1 Chron. xxvi. 16; 2 Chron. ix. 11; xxxii. 5.

woven with the history of human redemption. The unrivalled privileges it enjoyed were equalled only by what even their own historian characterizes as the unparalleled wickedness of its inhabitants. Their superstitions, their gross corruptions in religious principle and moral practice; their sad decline from the purity of faith and worship transmitted to them through the institutions of Moses, and of which, by their selection as the people of God, they were the appointed guardians; above all, their enormous crime in rejecting and crucifying the Messiah, led to the overthrow of this famous but guilty city in the seventieth year of the christian era. Its protracted siege, the frantic conduct of the people, and the miseries they experienced, both within and without the walls, comprise a tale of misfortune which forms one of the saddest chapters in the history of man, and in which are seen written in indelible characters, at once the righteous judgment of God, and the evidences of Christ's veracity as a prophet.

[The following are the observations of Pliny Fisk on the modern town :—' Jerusalem appears, in a general view, to be situated on the side of a mountain, descending towards the east, where it is divided from Mount Olivet by the valley of Cedron. The south wall passes over Mount Zion, near its summit, so that a great part of the hill is without the city. We have viewed Jerusalem from different stations, have walked around it, and within it, and have stood on the Mount of Olives, with Josephus' description of it in our hands, trying to discover the hills and valleys as laid down by him near 1800 years ago, and after all our research, we compare Jerusalem to a beautiful person, whom we have not seen for many years, and who has passed through a variety of changes and misfortunes, which have caused the rose on her cheek to fade, her flesh to consume away, and her skin to become dry, but who still retains some general features by which we recognise her as the person who used to be the delight of the

circle in which she moved. We measured the city by paces, and found it to be about two miles and two-thirds in circumference.

[‘In regard to the population of Jerusalem, the following estimate seems to us as correct as any one we have heard, viz. Mussulmans, 10,000 ; Jews, 6000 ; Greeks, 2000 ; Catholics, 1500 ; Armenians, 500 ; total, 20,000. Some think the Jews more numerous than the Mussulmans, but they occupy a much smaller part of the city than the Turks and Arabs. The Armenians live in and around their convent on Mount Zion ; the Greeks and Catholics have their convents and houses on Calvary. The Turks and Arabs occupy Bezetha, and all the eastern part of the city, and have scattered dwellings in every quarter. The Jews live in the dust between Zion and Moriah. The whole area of the ancient Jewish temple on Moriah, which now encloses the mosque of Omar, is walled in, and none but Mussulmans are allowed to enter it on pain of death. In or near it are four minarets. There are two others on Bezetha, one on Acra, one on Zion, and two on Calvary, placed on opposite sides of the holy sepulchre, like the two thieves on the right and left of our Lord. The Jews have a number of synagogues, all connected together in the quarter where they live. The Catholics have one convent on Calvary, the Greeks twelve, and one near Zion gate. The Armenians have three convents on Mount Zion, a large one and a small one in the city, and another without Zion gate. The Copts, Syrians, and Abyssinians, have also each a small convent. The houses are of stone, most of them low and irregular, with flat roofs or terraces, in the middle of which usually rises a small dome. The windows are small, and those toward the street have usually strong iron gates for defence, and thin fine wooden grates, to prevent the women from being seen by those who pass. The streets are narrow, and most of them irregular, and there are but few gardens in the city.’

[4. Perea, or the country beyond Jordan, was subdivided into seven provinces,—Abilene, Trachonitis, Iturea, Gaulonitis, Batanea, Perea, Idumea. The most northerly of these cantons formed a part of Cœle-Syria, bounded on the east and west by Libanus and Antilibanus. It derived its name from its chief town, Abila, signifying verdant spot: ‘When the Romans,’ says Rosenmüller, ‘made themselves masters of Western Asia, this district also became subject to them; and the Tetrarchs, who had probably attained to independence towards the close of the Syrian dominion, were established as their vassals.’ It is mentioned in the gospel history as being under the government of Lysanias the Tetrarch.* Trachonitis was bounded on the north by Damascus, on the south by Iturea, on the east by Arabia Deserta, and on the west by Batanea. This district of country, which Burckhardt calls El Ledja, abounds with rocks, in which are immense excavations, anciently the haunts of numerous banditti. A short time before the commencement of the christian era, it was occupied by Zenodorus, who being convicted of conniving at frequent robberies of caravans, was displaced by the Romans under Varro, and his tributary kingdom, consisting of Trachonitis, Auranitis or the Hauran, and Batanea, conferred on Herod the Great, who was a favourite of the Emperor Augustus; but on the express condition of his extirpating the marauders. The rocky and inaccessible fastnesses in which the robbers concealed themselves, rendered the fulfilment of this condition no easy affair; and accordingly their suppression was the object which occupied the attention of Herod during the whole of his reign. On his decease, Trachonitis and Iturea fell to the share of his younger son, Philip.†

[Iturea, the precise boundaries of which it is difficult to assign, as it is sometimes described as another name for Trachonitis, and at other times as lying to

* Luke iii. 1.

† Luke iii. 1.

the south of that province, received its name from Jetur, a son of Ishmael, whose descendants peopled it.* It was called Auranitis, from Haouran, its chief city.† The Itureans, who were skilful archers and infamous robbers, were invaded in the reign of Joshua by a confederate army of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, who, probably provoked by the frequent raids of these marauding neighbours, took reprisals in men and cattle, dispossessed almost the whole of the original inhabitants, and colonized the district themselves.‡ Haouran, the modern name of this province, is subject to the Pacha of Damascus, who derives from it an ample revenue, as it is distinguished both for the abundance and the quality of its produce, especially in the article of wheat. Its population is estimated by Burckhardt at more than 50,000 inhabitants.

[Gaulonitis, according to Josephus, comprised the district that lay along the banks of the Jordan, from the fountains of that river to the point where it enters the sea of Tiberias.

[Batanea formed the southern part of the ancient kingdom of Bashan. Neither of these two latter provinces are mentioned in the New Testament.

[Perea proper, anciently Gilead, now El-Belka, ‘the country beyond Jordan,’§ was a district of country equal in extent to Galilee, and, with the exception of a few bleak and barren tracts, was generally fertile, well watered, and well stocked with the natural productions which grow in Palestine. Its boundaries are described by Josephus in the following terms:—‘Its northern parts are bounded by Pella and the Jabbok; its western by the Jordan; the land of Moab and the Arnon form its southern border, while in the east it extends to Arabia.|| Its chief towns were, Gadara,

* Gen. xxv. 15; 1 Chron. i. 31.

† Ezek. xlvii. 16; Burckhardt's *Travels in Syria*, p. 285.

‡ 1 Chron. v. 19.

§ Matt. iv. 25.

|| Wars of the Jews, b. iii. ch. 3, § 3.

which, in the time of Josephus, was the capital of the province. The Jews who inhabited it, both perhaps from the influence of a heathen government and their intercourse with idolatrous neighbours, had carried on, from notions of cupidity, and contrary to the divine law, an extensive trade in the breeding and sale of swine. On one occasion, a very signal rebuke was given to them by Christ ; but instead of evincing any disposition to put an end to their forbidden traffic, they peremptorily insisted on his immediate departure from their territories.* Gergesa was within a short distance of Gadara, the walls of the latter extending close to the former, making it difficult to tell exactly where the limits of the one town terminated, and the suburbs of the other began,—a circumstance which, in the account given by the evangelists of our Lord's landing on this coast, suggests a very natural and obvious explanation of their discrepancy ; Matthew calling it the country of the Gergesenes, while Mark and Luke say that he came into that of the Gadarenes.† It was not till 1806 that the site of Gergesa was explored ; since then, it has been frequently visited,—its ruins affording a variety and interest not inferior to those of Palmyra. Pella, the place of refuge chosen by the Christians who fled, by the admonition of Christ, when the Roman army sat down to invest Jerusalem. Machærus, a fortified town, in the castle of which Herod was giving his customary annual fete on the anniversary of his birth-day, when Salome, having charmed the king and all his court by the gracefulness of her dancing, was instigated, through the artful address of her mother, to solicit the head of the Baptist, who lay imprisoned in the dungeon of the same fortress.‡

* Luke viii. 26.

† Matt. viii. 28 ; Mark v. 1 ; Luke viii. 26.

‡ Matt. xiv. Gadara, Gergesa, Pella, together with Hippos, Dios, Damascus, Otopos, Philadelphia, Raphana, and Scythopolis, formed that group of ten cities which were called the district of Decapolis. Matt. iv. 25 ; Mark v. 20 ; vii. 31.

[5. Idumea comprehended the region lying between the lake Asphaltites and the Red Sea, which, in modern times, is known by the name of Arabia Petræa, from Petra, its capital. A schism having taken place amongst the people who inhabited Judea in the time of the Babylonish captivity, a considerable body withdrew to the south-west, and settled in that part of the country which had been in the possession of the tribe of Simeon, and the adjoining half of the tribe of Judah, which, together with the northern portion of Arabia that lay contiguous, was thenceforth denominated Idumea. During the wars of the Maccabees, these Idumeans were conquered by John Hyrcanus, who gave them the alternative of either conforming to the Jewish religion, or quitting their possessions. Having submitted to the institutions of Moses, they were received into the bosom of the Jewish church, and eventually blended with the Jewish nation. This district, as well as the whole neighbourhood, poured out its population to wait upon the ministry of our Lord.*

THE BORDERS OF PALESTINE.

[Syria Proper included that region which lay between Mount Taurus, on the north, and Palestine and Arabia on the south, and between the Mediterranean and the Euphrates. It was anciently subdivided into a number of petty kingdoms, of which those mentioned in Scripture are the following :—

[Arpad, supposed to be the Arphas of Josephus, situated on the north-east of the country of Bashan, though it cannot be accurately defined. It is mentioned in connexion with the adjoining kingdom of

[Hamath, which included the territory on the north frontier of Palestine, lying between the Mediterranean and the kingdom of Damascus. It was originally occupied by a nomadic tribe of Canaanites, but after-

* Mark iii. 8.

wards rose into a separate kingdom, which in the time of David was ruled by Toi, an ally of that prince.*

[Beth-Rehob, or simply Rehob, was situated, according to some, eastward of Sidon, and, according to others, it is with greater probability supposed to be the same as El-Hule, an extensive and fertile champaign country at the foot of Antilibanus, a few leagues below Paneas. The Ammonites engaged the subjects of this petty kingdom, along with some of their neighbours, as mercenaries to assist them in the war they provoked by their wanton and gratuitous insult of David's ambassadors.†

[Damascus, which was conquered and made tributary by David. 'The land of Hadrach formed a part of it, or lay contiguous.'‡

[Geshur lay on the east side of Jordan, between Mount Hermon and the province of Bashan, stretching northward to Damascus. It fell within the territory assigned to the east half of Manasseh, as formerly mentioned.

[Haouran was situated on the north-east side of Jordan, extending from the sea of Tiberias northwards to Damascus. It still retains the name, and as described by Burckhardt, 'it is bordered on the east by the rocky district El-Ledja, and by the Jibbel Haouran, both of which are sometimes comprised within the Haouran. To the south-east, where Bozra and El Remtha are the farthest inhabited villages, the Haouran borders upon the deserts. Its western limits are the chain of villages on the Hadjee or pilgrim's road from Ghebarib as far south as Remtha. The Haouran, therefore, comprises part of Trachonitis and Iturea, the whole of Auranitis and the north districts of Batanea.'§

* Gen. x. 18; Num. xiii. 21; Joshua xiii. 5; Judges iii. 3; 2 Sam. viii. 9; 2 Kings xvii. 24; xviii. 34; Zech. ix. 2.

† 2 Sam. x. 6.

‡ 2 Sam. viii. 5.

§ 1 Sam. xiv. 47; 2 Sam. viii. 3; x. 15; Ezek. xlvii. 18.

[Zobah, the most ancient and the largest of these petty kingdoms, was conquered by Saul. Rehob, an enterprising chief of that country established himself subsequently as master of all Syria, in one great consolidated kingdom. His son Hadadezer was several times defeated by David, first with his own forces, and afterwards, when reinforced by auxiliaries from Damascus. The Zobahites furnished 20,000 foot soldiers to assist the Ammonites in the war of retaliation, which by their insolent behaviour they provoked David to proclaim against that people. The kingdom of Zobah became eventually tributary to Israel. But Rezon having fled from Zobah to Damascus, which he seized, and where he acquired a great accession of territory and power, threw off the yoke, and was 'the adversary of Israel all the days of Solomon.*']

Rivers.—The only rivers of Syria mentioned in the bible, are Abana, now Baneas, and Pharpar, now the Fidsheh, rivers of Damascus. The only stream, however, which, in modern times, waters that ancient capital of Syria, is called the Barrady. The water of this river, like the water of the Jordan, is of a white sulphureous hue and an unpleasant taste.† It is not twenty yards over; but rushes down from the mountain with great rapidity, and with so large a body of water, that it abundantly supplies the thirsty fields and gardens around, and the innumerable baths and fountains within the city.

The river, as soon as it issues from the disparted mountain into the plain, is divided into three streams, of which the one in the middle, which is the largest of the three, runs directly to Damascus through a large open field, called the Ager Damascenus, and is distributed to all the cisterns and fountains in the city. The other two, which Maundrell takes to be the work of art, are drawn round; one to the right hand, and the other to the left, on the borders of the gardens, into

* Kings xi. 25.

† Richardson's Travels, vol. ii. p. 499.

which they are introduced by little currents, and conducted to every part of the wood. The distribution is so complete, that not a garden but has a fine quick stream running through it, which both waters the thirsty soil and supplies a number of artificial fountains and other water works, adding greatly to the beauty and convenience of the retreat. This skilful distribution of water is as old as the days of Homer: for he tells us that the gardener, with a spade in his hand, opening the furrow, conducts a stream into every garden and a rill to every plant.* But the consequence of the distribution is fatal to the river, which is almost wholly drunk up by the city and gardens. The small part of it which escapes, is united again into one channel on the south-east side of the city; and after a course of about three or four miles, finally loses itself in a morass, without reaching the sea.

The Greeks, and from them the Romans, gave to this river the name of Chrysorrhoas; but as for Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, mentioned by the sacred writer, not even the names are preserved. These must therefore have been only two branches of the Barrady; and one of them was probably the same stream that runs through the Ager Damascenus directly to the city, which seems by its serpentine course, to be a natural channel.† The other it is now difficult to find; but this will be no matter of surprise, when it is considered how often the Damascenes have altered the course of this river, to suit their own convenience and pleasure.‡

The numerous and important advantages, which the winding streams of the Barrady confer on the city of Damascus and its adjacent fields, sufficiently account for the indignant reply of Naaman the Syrian, to the prophet:—‘Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them and be clean? So he turned, and

* Iliad, b. xxi. l. 257.

† Richardson's Travels, vol. iii. p. 477.

‡ Maundrell's Journey, p. 117-132.

went away in a rage.' The haughty Syrian, piqued that the prophet treated him with so little ceremony, considered the command to go and wash in Jordan seven times, as a species of insult offered to his native land; he did not know, or would not consider, that the word of Jehovah imparts efficacy to the most unpromising means.

[The chief towns of Syria, mentioned in Scripture, are Hamath, which the Orontes divided into two. This city experienced anciently repeated changes of masters,—having fallen, first, under the power of the kings of Judah,—being afterwards recovered, it was for a while reigned over by native kings, but was again wrested from them by Jeroboam II., and finally destroyed by Shalmanezzer king of Assyria. A new city was long after erected on its site by Antiochus Epiphanes, under the name of Epiphania, which has now given place to the modern name of Hamah, which contains about 30,000 inhabitants.* Seleucia, a maritime town fifteen miles west of Antioch, and four north of the mouth of the Orontes. It was so strongly fortified, that Strabo describes it to be impregnable,—through the favour of Pompey, and several of the Roman emperors, it enjoyed peculiar privileges. It was from that point Paul and Barnabas embarked on their voyage to Cyprus. It is now in ruins, although an inconsiderable village of the name of Kapel has risen close to the site of this celebrated sea-port.

[Antioch, 'the queen of the east,' stood on the Orontes, which ran through it, at the distance of twenty miles from the coast of the Mediterranean. Some writers suppose it to have been the ancient Riblath,—the scene of the degradation of Zedekiah, and the massacre of his royal family,—at all events, it was the place where the Syrian monarchs, of the race of Seleucus Nicator, its founder, held their court, and where the Roman prefects established the seat of their pro-

* 2 Sam. viii. 9; 2 Kings xiv 28; xvii. 24 xviii. 34.

vincial government ;—the beauty of its situation and the salubrity of its climate being its great recommendations. In sacred history this city will ever be memorable as the place where the disciples of Jesus were first called Christians.* Its modern name is Antakia, and is said to occupy the southern site of the ancient city.

[Damascus, a city of great antiquity,† situated in a champaigne and well watered country, about 136 miles north of Jerusalem. Its first king fell under the victorious arms of David.‡ In the reign of Solomon, however, Rezon made it the capital of an independent kingdom.§ But Rezin, one of his descendants, being vanquished by Tiglath-pileser, it fell from the rank of a kingdom, and was annexed as a province of the Assyrian empire.|| By the Romans, into whose power it came along with the rest of Asia, it was made one of their strongest arsenals ; but in the apostolic age, it was made over by that people to Aretas, who, as their tributary, reigned over Arabia Petræa. It was on his way to this city, with a commission to incarcerate all the Christians, that Paul met with the heavenly vision that occasioned his remarkable conversion.¶ A large city of the same name still occupies this site ; and although its streets are narrow, and the houses in general somewhat mean in appearance, it is said to extend about two miles in length, and to have many palaces, the splendour of which, however, is only known to those who visit the interior.]

The city itself is of a long straight figure, extending about two miles, and lying nearly in the direction of north-east and south-west. It is surrounded with gardens, stretching no less, according to common estimation, than thirty miles around ; which gives it the appearance of a city in the midst of a vast wood. The

* Acts xi. 26.

‡ 2 Sam. viii. 5.

|| Isaiah viii. 4.

† Gen. xiv. 15 ; xv. 2.

§ 1 Kings xi. 24.

¶ Acts ix.

gardens are thickly planted with fruit trees of all kinds, that are kept fresh and verdant by the waters of the Barrady. Numerous turrets and gilded steeples glittering in the blazing sun-beam among the green boughs, diversify and heighten the beauty of the prospect. On the north side of this vast wood, is a place called Sol-kás, crowded with beautiful summer-houses and gardens.* This delightful scene, and even the city itself, may be considered as the creation of the Barrady, which supplies both the gardens and the city, diffusing beauty and fertility wherever it flows.

[Helbon, sometimes called also Haleb, or Halybon, the modern Aleppo, is a very ancient and still a beautiful town. It was celebrated for its wine and fine wool.† The country on every side of it is laid out in the most beautiful grandeur.

[Rezeph was the Resepha of the classics, and is described by Ptolemy as in the neighbourhood of Palmyra.‡

[Rehoboth, the birth-place of Saul, king of Edom, was situated on the Euphrates.§

[Tadmor, or Tamar, which signifies a palm-tree, called by Europeans Palmyra, and by the Arabs Thadmor, was built by Solomon, probably as a fortified place, on the borders of his dominions, to suppress the incursions of the Arabs.|| It is still famous for its architectural ruins.

[Baal-Gad is described as lying in the valley of Lebanon, under mount Hermon. It is thought to be the same as Heliopolis, the modern Baalbek.

[Hobah was a little north of Damascus, and is memorable as the place whither Abraham pursued the four kings who made a combined attack upon him.¶

[Berothai, famous for its mines, belonged to the kingdom of Zobah.** It is by some supposed to be the

* Richardson's Travels, vol. ii. p. 474.

† 2 Kings xix. 12.

‡ 1 Kings ix. 18; 2 Chron. viii. 4.

** 2 Sam. viii. 8.

† Ezekiel xxvii. 18.

§ Gen. xxxvi. 37.

¶ Gen. xiv. 15.

modern Bir, and by others, though with little probability, to be Beyrout.

[Beth Eden, *i. e.* the house of Eden, where the ancient kings of Syria had a summer palace.*

[Helam, celebrated as the scene of a victory gained by David over the forces of Hadarezer.†]

PHILISTIA.

Gaza lay in the southern extremity of that narrow slip of country which submitted to the arms of the Philistines ; and the city of Gaza, from which the lordship took its name, stood in the south-west angle of the land of Canaan. This was the city whose gates Samson carried away to the top of the hill, and where he was kept in prison by his cruel and ungenerous enemies. It was famous for the temple of Dagon, which the renowned Israelite pulled down upon himself and his unfeeling tormentors, in revenge for the loss of his sight and his liberty. This place was afterwards chosen by the Persians to be the treasury where they deposited the tribute of the western provinces of their immense empire ; whence all riches received, at length, among the people of those countries, the name of Gaza. It was destroyed by Alexander the Great, as the prophet had foretold, and consigned to perpetual desolation. The city built by Constantine, and called by the name of Gaza, is nearer to the sea than the ancient city, and by consequence does not affect the truth of the prediction.

Next to Gaza, northward, rose the city of Askelon, styled by the Greeks and Latins Ascalon, and situated also on the sea-shore—now a scene of silent desolation. So completely has the prediction been fulfilled :—‘ The king shall perish from Gaza, and Askelon shall not be inhabited.’‡ Gaza contains between two and three thousand inhabitants, but has long been deprived of

* Amos i. 5.

† 2 Sam. x. 16.

‡ Zech. ix. 5.

her king : the ruins of Askelon do not shelter a single human being.* It is said to have been famous among the idolatrous nations of antiquity, for a temple dedicated to Decreto, the mother of Semiramis, who was adored here under the form of a mermaid ; and for a temple of Apollo, in which Herod, the father of Antipater, and grandfather of Herod the Great, officiated as priest.

Above Ascalon, still farther to the north, stood the city of Ashdod, called by the Greeks Azotus, and mentioned under that name in the Acts of the Apostles. It lies near the shore, between Gaza and Joppa, and was distinguished by the temple of Dagon. Into this temple the captive ark of Jehovah was brought by the triumphant idolaters, and set by the side of their unsightly idol. But their joy was of short duration ; the object of their stupid veneration was laid prostrate before the symbol of the divine presence, and broken in pieces, and a severe, but righteous vengeance, inflicted on themselves for their presumption. The passage is too important to be omitted :—‘ And when they of Ashdod rose early on the morrow, behold Dagon was fallen upon his face to the earth, before the ark of the Lord ; and they took Dagon and set him in his place again. And when they arose early on the morrow morning, behold Dagon was fallen on his face to the ground, before the ark of the Lord ; and the head of Dagon, and both the palms of his hands, were cut off upon the threshold ; only the stump of Dagon was left to him.’ Nor was this all :—‘ The hand of the Lord was heavy also upon the men of Ashdod ; and he destroyed and smote them with emerods, even Ashdod and the coasts thereof. And when the men of Ashdod saw that it was so, they said, The ark of the God of Israel shall not abide with us ; for his hand is sore upon us and upon Dagon our god. They sent therefore and gathered all the lords of the Philistines unto them, and

* Trav. by Dr Richardson, vol. ii. p. 204.

said, What shall we do with the ark of the God of Israel? And they answered, let the ark of the God of Israel be carried about unto Gath. And they carried the ark of the God of Israel thither.*

Gath, lying still farther to the north than Ashdod, was memorable in the history of the Old Testament for being the birth-place of the giant Goliath, who defied the armies of the living God, and suffered the punishment due to his impiety, from the hand of David. The city was dismantled by this prince; but was afterwards rebuilt by Rehoboam his grandson; and after being again dismantled by Ozias king of Judah, was totally destroyed by Hazael king of Syria. But from this catastrophe it gradually recovered, and retained its ancient name in the days of Eusebius and Jerome, who place it about four miles from Eleutheropolis, towards Diospolis or Lydda.

Gath suffered severely while the ark of the covenant was detained within its walls:—‘The hand of the Lord,’ says the sacred writer, ‘was against the city with a very great destruction; and he smote the men of the city both small and great; and they had emerods in their secret parts. Therefore they sent the ark of God to Ekron.’†

Ekron.—This city was placed in the northern extremity of the country which submitted to the yoke of the Philistines. It was called by the Greeks Accaron; was a place of great wealth and power, and held out a long time against the arms of Israel. Ekron is frequently mentioned in the holy Scriptures, and particularly for the idolatrous worship of Beelzebub, that is, the lord of flies; a name given him by the Jews, either in contempt of his divinity and the rites of his worship, or in allusion to the numerous swarms of flies which attended his sacrifices. But whatever might be the reason for distinguishing him by this name, certain it is, that in this city was the principal seat of his wor-

* 1 Samuel v. 2-8,

† 1 Samuel v. 9, 10.

ship: here he was held in the highest honour, and is therefore called in scripture 'the god of Ekron.'

The inhabitants of Ekron, less hardened in crime, or less insensible to danger than their neighbours, were the first that advised the Philistines to restore the ark of Jehovah the God of Israel:—'The Ekronites cried out, saying, they have brought about the ark of the God of Israel to us, to slay us and our people. So they sent and gathered together all the Lords of the Philistines, and said, Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it go to its own place;' and the destructive calamity which hung over their devoted city was averted.*

[Idumea, or Edom, the ancient country of Esau's descendants, was bounded on the north by the Holy Land and the Dead Sea, on the east by Arabia Petræa, which afterwards gave name to the whole country, and reached southwards to the gulf of Elath. In this extensive region were included various smaller districts, as the land of Uz,† the native country of Job; of Teman,‡ where Eliphaz, one of the patriarch's friends, resided, which is sometimes put for the name of the whole region; that of Dedan;§ and of Buz,|| whence Elihu came. Besides these Doeg was,¶ and Herod the Great is said to have been, both Edomites by birth. Its chief towns were Selah, or Joktheel,** afterwards called Petra. Bozrah, famous for its breed of cattle. Elath and Eziongeber, on the extremity of the eastern gulf of the Red Sea, annexed to the territories of Israel by the conquests of David, and rendered seaports of great importance in the time of Solomon.†† The Horites, the aboriginal inhabitants, being subdued and expelled, the descendants of Esau, their conquerors, took possession of the country, and rose to be a populous and

* Wells' Hist. Geog. vol. ii. pp. 5, 6.

† Lam. iv. 21; Jer. xxv. 20.

‡ Job ii. 11; Jer. xlix. 7, 20.

§ Ezek. xxv. 13.

|| Job xxxii. 2; Jer. xxv. 23.

¶ 1 Samuel xxi. 7.

** 2 Kings xiv. 7.

†† 1 Chron. xviii. 11; 1 Kings ix. 26.

powerful nation,* who, by their lawless aggressions, made their very name a terror to the neighbouring nations. Their government was carried on first by kings, and afterwards by a succession of sheiks.† The natural fertility and luxuriant produce of this country in patriarchal times is more than once brought under our notice in the sacred history,‡ and besides, it was the high road through which was conveyed the flourishing commerce of Judea with the countries of Asia and Africa. ‘Bordering with Arabia on the east,’ says Volney, ‘and Egypt on the south-west, and forming from north to south the most commodious channel of communication between Jerusalem and her dependencies on the Red Sea, as well as between Syria and Judea, through the continuous valleys of El Ghor and El Arabia, which terminated on the one extremity at the borders of Judea, and on the other at Elath and Eziongeber on the eastern gulf of the Red Sea, Idumea may be said to have long formed the emporium of the commerce of the East.’ Nay, to use the words of a later writer, ‘The caravans in all ages from Minea in the interior of Arabia, and from Gerrha on the gulf of Persia, from Hadramaut on the ocean, and some even from Yemen, appear to have pointed to this country and its capital as their common centre; and from thence the trade seems to have again branched out in every direction, to Palestine, Egypt, and Syria, through Arsinoe, Gaza, Tyre, Jerusalem, Damascus, and a variety of subordinate routes, that all terminated on the Mediterranean.’

[A hereditary hostility seems to have subsisted all along between the people of this country, and their neighbours in Palestine. But it was not till the victorious reign of David that the posterity of Jacob realized their promised superiority over the descendants of Esau.§ Our limits do not admit of our tracing the

* Genesis xxxvi. 31.

† Genesis xxvii. 39; Numbers xx. 17.

‡ Genesis xxxvi. 31-43.

§ 2 Samuel viii. 14.

history of this country. Suffice it to say that their idolatry and inveterate enmity against Jacob have been signally punished in their once fruitful and populous country being so reduced, that there is 'not any remaining of the house of Esau,' for Edom was doomed to be 'cut off for ever;' and in this region, which was once the highway for the conveyance of the costliest merchandise of the wealthiest countries in the world, being so utterly swept by the besom of destruction, 'that none shall pass through it for ever and ever.'* The present state of Idumea affords remarkable and overwhelming attestations to the truth of scripture prophecy. Divine Providence has in very deed 'cut off from Mount Seir, or Edom, him that passeth out, and him that remaineth.'†

[Ammon lay eastward of Palestine, having Reuben and Gad on the west, and Moab on the north. Its chief city was Rabbah.‡ The inhabitants of this country traced their descent to Ben-Ammon, son of Lot, and they were exempted by the special command of God from the list of countries which the Israelites were at liberty to attack and appropriate.§ Insensible, however, to this favour, they frequently made inroads upon the settlements of Israel, and at one period they, in conjunction with their allies the Moabites, made the land of Canaan tributary to them for eighteen years, till, by the energy of Jephtha, it threw off the yoke and regained its independence.|| To check their incessant efforts to harass the Israelites who dwelt upon their borders, David sacked Rabbah their metropolis,¶ in consequence of which they were shorn of their main

* Isaiah xxxiv. 10; Jer. xlix.; Ezek. xxv.; xxxv.

† 'The repeated and persevering attempts of travellers,' says Mr Munro, 'to explore Idumea, have always proved abortive, except in two instances. Seetzen did "pass through," but died immediately after at Aleppo. Burckhardt penetrated it, but turned aside in dismay, and died soon after at Cairo.' See Keith's Evidences, where the literal interpretation of the prophecy is ably maintained.—Ed.

‡ 2 Sam. xii. 26; Ezek. xxi. 20.

§ Deut. ii. 9.

¶ Judges xi.

¶ 2 Sam. xi. 1; xii. 26.

strength, and remained in subjection during the whole of his reign. During the course of succeeding centuries they frequently rose and fell, were independent or tributary to the great masters of the world,—their rich and populous country always exciting the cupidity of every new conqueror. Not only after the commencement of the christian era, was their name sunk in that of the Arabians, but the prediction of Ezekiel has been signally fulfilled, ‘that they should not be remembered among the nations.’* The whole country is an immense waste, lying in utter desolation through the ignorance, sloth, and lawless aggressions of the Turks and Arabs, although here and there the uncommon fertility of the soil appears in the verdant wadys that form places of regular encampment, and in which some tribes of Bedouins pasture their cattle. Numerous vestiges remain of the ancient wealth and grandeur of the Ammonites. ‘At every step,’ says Burckhardt, ‘are to be found the remains of cities, temples, and public edifices.’

[Moab was bounded on the north by the river Arnon, which divided it from Ammon, and then from Reuben; on the east by Arabia; on the south and west by Midian. It was occupied at first by a people called the Emims,† who were dispossessed by the descendants of Moab, son of Lot; and although, in consequence of that descent they were, in common with the Ammonites, specially protected by God from all injuries during the progress of the Israelites to the promised land,‡ the king of Moab showed a spirit of determined hostility to that people, manifesting the greatest inhumanity, and concerting, besides, a deep laid plot, in conjunction with the Midianites, to entice them to apostacy.§ Their inhospitable and villainous conduct was punished by a stern and irrevocable sentence that excluded every Moabite from the congregation of the Lord till the tenth generation.|| In the time

* Ezek. xxv. 10.

† Deut. ii. 11.

‡ Deut. ii. 9.

§ Num. xxii. ; xxiv.

|| Deut. xxiii. 3.

of the Judges, Moab acquired the ascendancy over Israel for eighteen years, till Ehud, by the assassination of the king, and the slaughter of about 10,000 of his army, delivered his country from this state of ignominious vassalage.* Being in a succeeding age completely subdued by David,† they were so humbled and dispirited, that they never made any attempts to recover their independence, but continued tributary to Solomon; and, on the revolt of the ten tribes, to the powerful kingdom of Israel until the reign of Ahab, when their threatened rebellion was punished by the total desolation of their country, and that of Jehoshaphat, when their mighty army was almost annihilated.‡ At a subsequent period, they formed a league with Zedekiah to repel the encroachments of Nebuchadnezzar their common foe. But no sooner had that proud conqueror heard of their proposed alliance than he marched against Moab at the head of an immense army, laid waste the country with fire and sword, and carried multitudes of the people into captivity.§ Although a few were still left, the inhabitants never recovered from the effects of this disastrous invasion, but fell an easy prey to successive conquerors, till at length, in common with the rest of the world, this country became a province of the Roman empire. Thus, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah, Moab was ‘destroyed from being a distinct people.’|| Their religion was idolatry, and the principal objects of their worship were Baal-peor and Chemosh.¶

[The natural resources of Moab are great, and were it not for the barbarity and ignorance of the Arabs, who have made it a perfect desert, it would be a beautiful and smiling country. Even amid the wide-spread desolation, however, that reigns every where around, this country contains evident traces of its ancient pro-

* Judges iii. 14.

† 2 Chron. xx. 22.

‡ Jer. xlviii. 9, 42.

† 2 Samuel viii. 2.

§ 2 Kings xxiv. 2.

¶ Num. xxv. 1-3; 1 Kings xi. 7.

ductiveness and grandeur. The ruins of temples and gigantic edifices that are still to be found, the traces of hanging gardens, the dilapidated columns and broken cisterns, the vestiges of ploughed fields and high walls, bear testimony to the wealth, enterprise, and taste of its ancient inhabitants.

[Its chief towns were Ar or Kir-Aroer, Bozra, Dibon, Diblath, Eleale, Heshbon, Jazer, Jahazah, Halon, Horonaim, Kirjathaim, Medeba, Sibmah, which for the most part were wrested from the Israelites. Ruth was a native of this country.

[Midian, an extensive country lying between the Dead and the Red Seas ; the whole region, as far south as Sinai, receiving the general appellation of ‘the land of Midian.’

[The Midianites early distinguished themselves by their pursuits in commerce, being travelling merchants who carried on a lucrative trade with Egypt* in the days of Joseph. They seem to have been so widely scattered over that vast country, that in many places, particularly in the north, they long subsisted in the form of numerous petty independent sheikdoms, like that of Jethro, who preserved the primitive form of patriarchal government, and the principles of pure and undefiled religion.† In other parts, however, they were idolaters, assumed the character of a regular society, and became a populous and powerful nation, divided into five tribes, and governed by native kings, who were afterwards reduced by foreign conquest to the subordinate rank of dukes.‡ During the march of the Israelites to Canaan, the northern Midianites joined with Moab to resist the progress of that formidable body of emigrants,—a measure of which they had soon bitter cause to repent.§ In the time of the Judges, they had risen to so great a population and power, that they held Israel in thralldom for seven years ; which might have continued longer, had

* Genesis xxxvii.

† Joshua xiii. 21.

† Exodus ii. 15-22; xviii. 1.

§ Num. xxii. ; xxxi.

not the Lord inspired Gideon with the energy and determination to assert the freedom of his country.* This country has long been in the possession of the roving Arabs.

PHŒNICIA.

[In the time of Christ, the country of Phœnicia on the north-west corner of Palestine, formed a part of Syria under the name of Syro-Phœnicia. Its two principal towns were Sidon and Tyre.

[Sidon and Tyre, as has been formerly stated, lay within the territory assigned to Asher, but were never possessed by that tribe. Their celebrity as maritime cities demands for them a particular notice.] Sidon was one of the most ancient cities in the world, and long the wealthiest and the greatest of which Phœnicia could boast. It was very strong both by nature and art. On the north side a citadel, built on an inaccessible rock, and environed on all sides by the sea; and on the south side, another fort defended the mouth of the harbour. Secured on all sides against the assaults of her enemies, and enriched by the extensive commerce which she carried on with the surrounding nations of Asia and Europe, her inhabitants lived in the greatest splendour, and indulged without restraint in every voluptuous gratification. So great was their luxury, that *to live after the manner of the Sidonians*, became a sort of proverbial phrase for living quietly and securely in ease and pleasure.† But their wealth and luxury do not seem, at least for several ages, to have enervated their minds, and destroyed their powers of exertion and habits of industry; for we know, from the testimony of an inspired writer, that in the days of Solomon ‘none were skilled to hew timber like the Zidonians.’ They are represented by writers, both sacred and profane, as excellent artificers in several other professions or trades; and in proof of this fact, many of them were

* Judges vi.; viii.; Psalm lxxxiii. 9.

† Judges xviii. 7.

retained in the pay of Solomon, and employed as his principal workmen in building the temple of Jehovah.*

Though the Tyrians were accustomed to boast of the great antiquity of their city, it cannot be doubted that Sidon can trace her history to a remote date; for in the same chapter where the prophet Isaiah records the vain boast of the Tyrians, he expressly calls Tyre the daughter of Sidon;† by which he means, that the Tyrians were a colony of the Sidonians. Indeed Tyre rose, by degrees, to a height of greatness and splendour, which her illustrious parent was never able to reach; yet it is evident, from ancient writers, that she was for several ages greatly her inferior. The former was distinguished by the name of the strong city so early as the days of Joshua; but in the very same passage, the latter receives the more significant and honourable title of ‘the great Zidon,’ to intimate, that she was then the capital of Phœnicia. Nor ought it to be forgotten, that Homer never mentions Tyre in any part of his writings, while he often celebrates the ingenuity and industry of the Sidonians.‡ Many years after Sidon was built, says an ancient writer, the Sidonians being attacked by the king of Ascalon, escaped in their ships, and laid the foundations of Tyre, sometime before the destruction of Troy.§ This event happened, according to Josephus, about two hundred and forty years before the building of Solomon’s temple.|| [Sidon, being taken by Nebuchadnezzar, became successively tributary to the Chaldeans and Persians, although it still continued to be governed by native kings. Disgusted with the intolerable exactions of Darius Ochus the Persian monarch, they formed a league against him with the king of Egypt, the intelligence of which so exasperated him that he immediately raised an army, and arrived by

* Well’s Hist. Geog. vol. i. p. 136.

† Isaiah xxiii. 7, 12.

‡ Iliad, lib. xxiii. l. 743; Odyss. lib. xv. l. 114.

§ Justin. lib. xviii. cap. 1, sec. 5, p. 381.

|| Antiq. book viii. c. 3, sec. 1.

forced marches at Sidon, which was treacherously opened to admit him. The inhabitants, in despair, set fire to their city, and 40,000 people perished in the flames.] After the taking of Sidon by the Persians, the city of Tyre rapidly increased in wealth and greatness, and became, in a short time, the capital of Phœnicia, and the mart of the whole earth. At the time it was besieged by Alexander, it was, in every respect, the greatest commercial city in the world. Including ancient Tyre,* it was nineteen miles in circuit: the houses were spacious, magnificent, consisting of several stories, and higher than those of Rome. Pre-eminent in riches and splendour, rose the magnificent temples of Olympian Jove, Astarte, and other deities adored by the Tyrians, constructed by Hiram, adorned with pillars of gold, glittering with precious stones, and enriched with the splendid offerings of many kings. The city was defended by a wall an hundred and fifty feet in height, of huge stones cemented with lime. Two harbours received its innumerable vessels, one looking towards Sidon, the other to Egypt. Strabo places it nearly at the distance of twenty-five miles from Sidon, its renowned parent.† The inhabitants of Tyre, like the Sidonians from whom they derived their origin, were distinguished for the acuteness and versatility of their genius. They were skilled in arithmetic and astronomy: but in the mechanical arts they were scarcely equalled, certainly not surpassed, by any people. For the brilliant colour known to the ancients by the name of the Tyrian purple, the kings of the east were indebted to the ingenuity of that people. The fabrics produced in the Sidonian looms rivalled the fine linen of Egypt; while the productions of the artificer in iron, in brass, and in crystal, were not less remarkable for

* Tyre was built on an eminence, on the east of the Mediterranean, and was called *Palæo Tyrus*, Ancient Tyre, to distinguish it from the new and more splendid city of the same name, which was built upon lower land, half a mile from the shore,—*Editor*.

† Lib. xvi. p. 515.

the beauty of the device than for the delicacy of the execution. It is, therefore, a true account which the inspired prophet has given of the greatness and splendour of Tyre. Isaiah calls her, 'a mart of nations; the crowning city, whose merchants are princes, whose traffickers are the honourable of the earth;' and Ezekiel, alluding to old Tyre, places her 'at the entry of the sea;' and, in another passage, to the new city, 'in the heart of the seas,' recounts the various nations that carried on a lucrative commerce with the Tyrians.

[The testimony of Volney, an inveterate infidel, to the truth of Ezekiel's description of the commercial relations of this renowned city, which he characterizes as 'a historical fragment,' is so invaluable, that we must insert the passage entire in his own words, accompanied with the translation, and the geographical notes of this learned traveller:—'The power of Tyre in the Mediterranean and in the west is well known: of this, Carthage, Utica, and Cadiz are celebrated monuments. We know that she extended her navigation even into the ocean, and carried her commerce beyond England to the north, and the Canaries to the south. Her connexions with the east, though less known, were not less considerable: the islands of Tyrus and Aradus (the modern Bahrein) in the Persian Gulf, the cities of Faran and Phœnicum Oppidum on the Red Sea, in ruins even in the time of the Greeks, prove that the Tyrians had long frequented the coast of Arabia and the Indian Sea; but there exists a *historical fragment*, which contains descriptions the more valuable as they present a picture of distant ages, perfectly similar to that of modern times. I shall cite the words of the writer in all their prophetic enthusiasm, only correcting those expressions which have hitherto been misunderstood:—

' " Proud city, that art situate at the entry of the sea!
Tyre, who hast said, My borders are in the midst of the sea;
Hearken to the judgments pronounced against thee!
Thou hast extended thy commerce to [distant] islands,
Among the inhabitants of [unknown] coasts.

Thou makest the fir-trees of Sanir* into ships :
 The cedars of Lebanon are thy masts :
 The poplars of Bashan thy oars.
 Thy sailors are seated upon the box-wood of Cyprus,† inlaid with ivory.
 Thy sails and streamers are woven with fine flax from Egypt :
 Thy garments are dyed with blue and purple from Hellas.‡
 Sidon and Arvad send thee their rowers :
 Djabal§ her skilful ship-builders :
 Thy mathematicians and thy sages guide thy barks :
 All the ships of the sea are employed in thy commerce.
 The Persian, the Lydian, and the Egyptian, receive thy wages :
 Thy walls are hung round with their bucklers and their cuirasses.
 The sons of Arvad line thy parapets :
 And thy bowers, guarded by the Djemedians,|| glitter in their brilliant quivers.
 Every country is desirous of trading with thee.
 Tarsus sends to thy markets iron, tin, and lead.
 Yonia¶ and Teblis** supply thee with slaves and brazen vessels.
 Armenia sends thee mules, horses, and horsemen.
 The Arab of Dedan†† conveys thy merchandize.
 Numerous isles exchange with thee ivory and ebony.
 The Aranean‡‡ brings thee rubies, purple, embroidered work, fine linen, coral, and agate.
 The children of Israel and Judah sell thee cheese, balm, myrrh, raisins and oil,
 And Damascus supplies thee wine of Helbon,§§ and fine wool.
 The Arabs of Oman offer to thy merchants polished iron, cinnamon, and the aromatic reed ;
 And the Arabs of Dedan bring thee rich carpets.
 The inhabitants of the desert and the sheiks of Redan exchange their lambs and their goats for thy valuable merchandize.
 The Arabs of Sarna and Rama|| enrich thee with aromatics, precious stones, and gold.¶¶

* Possibly Mount Sanine.

† Box of Katim. It is probable that the isle of Cyprus, on the coast of Cilicia, where the box abounds, is meant.

‡ The Archipelago. Elisha in the Hebrew does not differ much from Hellas, the ancient name of the Archipelago.

§ Djebila. ¶ A people of Phœnicia. ¶¶ Javan.

** Tobel, Teblis, or Teflis, lies to the north of Armenia, on the frontiers of Georgia. These countries are celebrated among the Greeks for slaves, and for the iron of the Chalybes.

†† Between Aleppo and Damascus.

‡‡ Syria. This name extended to the Cappadocians and the inhabitants of Upper Mesopotamia.

§§ Aleppo. || In the Yemen.

¶¶ According to Strabo, the Sabians furnished Syria with all the

The inhabitants of Haram, of Kalana,* and of Adana;†
 The sailors of the Arabs of Sheba, the Assyrians, and the Chaldeans,
 trade also with thee, and sell thee shawls, garnets artfully em-
 broidered,

Silver, masts, cordage, and cedars:

Yea, the vessels of Tarsus are in thy pay.

O Tyre! elate with the greatness of thy glory, and the immensity
 of thy riches,

The waves of the sea shall rise up against thee,

And the tempest plunge thee to the bottom of the waters," ' &c.†]

The pride and luxury which her unrivalled power and riches produced among all ranks of her citizens, and above all, the cruel and unbrotherly triumph in which the Tyrians indulged, when the chosen people of God yielded to the arms of Nebuchadnezzar, and were led away captive beyond the rivers of Babylon, excited against them the displeasure of Heaven. As a just punishment of their crimes, continental Tyre was taken and destroyed by the Chaldeans, and remained in a state of ruin and desolation seventy years,—a term of equal duration with the captivity of Judah, whom they had so barbarously insulted in the hour of her distress. At the end of that period, Tyre recovered her wealth and splendour; an event which the prophet Zechariah describes in these striking terms:—‘ And Tyrus did build herself a strong hold, and heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire of the streets.’§ But with her commerce and prosperity, her wickedness returned; and the judgments of God quickly followed. In fulfilment of ancient prophecies which

gold that country received, before they were supplanted by the inhabitants of Garra, near the north of the Euphrates.—*Editor*.

* Mesopotamia.

† Near Tarsus.

‡ ‘ The vicissitudes of time,’ says Volney, ‘ or rather the barbarism of the Greeks of the lower empire and the Mohammedan, have ACCOMPLISHED this prediction. Instead of her ancient commerce, so vigorous and enterprising, Tsour (Tyre), reduced to a paltry village, has no trade except the exportation of a few sacks of corn and raw cotton, nor any merchant but a single Greek factor, in the service of the French of Sidon, who scarce makes sufficient profit to support his family.’—*Editor*.

§ Zech. ix. 3.

sealed her doom, and even described the manner of her future destruction, Alexander besieged, took, and set the city on fire; but so great was the forbearance of Heaven, so numerous and efficient were her resources, that in the short period of nineteen years she was able to withstand the fleets and armies of Antigonos, and to sustain a siege of fifteen months, before she was taken. But the time of her final desolation at length arrived; and nothing could divert or retard the full accomplishment of the divine purpose long before expressed by an inspired prophet:—‘ Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus, and I will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up: and they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers; I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock: it shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea, for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God.’* To shew the certainty of this fearful sentence, it is repeated, ‘ I will make thee like the top of a rock; thou shalt be a place to spread nets upon; thou shalt be built no more; for I the Lord have spoken it, saith the Lord God.’ And again:—‘ I will make thee a terror, and thou shalt be no more: though thou be sought for, yet shalt thou never be found again, saith the Lord God.’† The exact fulfilment of this prediction in all its parts, is attested by so many travellers of unimpeachable veracity, who have beheld and examined the ruins of this once great, and powerful, and splendid city, that the most stubborn unbeliever is awed into silence.

* Ezek. xxvi. 3-5.

† Ezek. xxvi. 14, 21.

COUNTRIES DISTANT FROM PALESTINE MENTIONED
IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

[Asia Minor is a large peninsular country, situated between the Black and the Mediterranean Seas, and extending about 1000 miles in length, and 400 in breadth. By the sacred writers it is called Asia, a name which they apply to designate sometimes the Lesser Asia,* sometimes the Roman province which comprehended Phrygia, Mysia, and a few of the adjoining countries; and at other times the extensive district of Lydia, embracing, in the widest sense, Ionia and Æolis; the whole region, in short, within which lay the seven churches of Asia; Ephesus, the capital of Ionia; Smyrna, a seaport in the same province; Pergamos, the ancient capital of Mysia; Thyatira, said by some to have belonged to Lydia, and by others to Mysia, in consequence of its situation on the borders of these provinces; Sardis and Philadelphia, in Lydia; Laodicea, the capital of Phrygia. This country was divided into the following provinces:—1. Cilicia, the capital of which was Tarsus, the birth-place of Paul;—a very ancient city, which, when the country was reduced to a province of the Roman empire, received the privileges of a free town, and rose in consequence to great wealth and importance, both in point of grandeur and science; 2. Cappadocia and Pontus, lying on the north of the former; 3. Bithynia and Galatia; 4. Lycaonia, in which lay the towns of Derbe, Lystra, and Iconium; 5. Lycia, the chief towns of which were Patara and Myra; 6. Pamphylia, containing the towns of Attalia and Perga, on the sea-coast; Pisidia, in which was Antioch; 7. Phrygia, in which stood Colosse, Hierapolis, and Laodicea; 8. Mysia, in which were Troas, Assos and Adramyttium, now Adramyti, situated on the coast, and in a gulf of the same

* Acts xxvii. 2.

name ; Cnidus, a town as well as a headland in Caria, Cape Krio.

[Macedonia, a country in Europe, bounded on the north by Servia and Upper Bosnia, on the south by the Grecian Archipelago and Thessaly, on the east by Thrace and Bulgaria, and on the west by Albania. Its chief towns were Amphipolis, now Emboli, on the river Strymon, which flowed round the city, a circumstance which gave rise to the name ; Apollonia ; Berea ; Neapolis, now Napoli ; Nicopolis ; Philippi ; Thessalonica, now Saloniki, at the head of the gulf of that name.

[Achaia was the name of that western portion of the Peloponnesus or Morea, which was bounded on the north by the Gulf of Corinth, on the south by Elis and Arcadia, on the east by Sicyonia, and on the west by the Ionian Sea. In the apostolic age, it was a Roman province, and Gallio was the deputy or proconsul when Paul travelled through it. Its chief towns were Athens, famous for its Areopagus or Mars' Hill, an eminence on which its senate-house stood ; Cenchrea, now Kenkri, the emporium of the district ; Corinth, the capital, celebrated for its luxury. The northern part of this province is exclusively called Greece by the sacred historian.*

[Islands in the Archipelago :—Chios and Samos ; Lesbos, the chief town of which was Mitylene ; Patmos ; Rhodes and Coos ; Samothracia, now Samandraci.

[Illyricum comprehended the modern countries of Slavonia and Albania, together with part of Bosnia and Croatia. It early received the gospel. It was divided into two provinces, of which only Dalmatia, lying on the western coast of the Gulf of Venice, is mentioned in the New Testament.

[Italy had the well-known Adria, or the Hadriatic Sea, now the Gulf of Venice, in which Paul was ship-

* Acts xx. 2.

wrecked, on the south and east, about 200 miles in length, and fifty in breadth. Its principal towns were Appii Forum, now Borgo Longo; and the Three Taverns, about thirty miles from the capital; Puteoli, now Pozzuoli, situated on an eminence opposite Baiæ; Rhegium, now Reggio; and Rome.

[Islands in the Mediterranean:—Cyprus, one of its largest islands, being about 200 miles long from east to west, and sixty broad. It is about 100 miles distant from Syria, and in ancient times was as celebrated for its beauty and productiveness, as it was infamous for the worship of Venus, and the consequent profligacy of its inhabitants. Its chief towns were Paphos and Salamis; Crete, now Candy, 180 miles in length, and about fifty-five in breadth, in which were the maritime towns of Lasea, Fairhavens, Phenice, on the western coast of the island, where the rocky and intricate shore formed a semicircular harbour, very commodious and safe for wintering in, and Salmone, now Salamoni, which was also a cape on the east of the island; Clauda, now Gozo, a small island south-west of Crete; Melita, generally supposed to be Malta, towards the coast of Africa, about fifty miles south of Sicily, consisting of one-continued mass of white and soft free-stone, about twenty miles long, and twelve broad,—by Bryant and others Melita is thought to be a small island off the coast of Illyricum; Sicily, the chief town of which was Syracuse.

[Spain, on the south-west of Europe.

[Æthiopia, now Abyssinia.

[Parthia, a country of Asia, on the west of Media.

[Scythia, the name given by the ancients to the whole northern regions of Europe and Asia, which were then unexplored and unknown.]

INDEX OF SUBJECTS.

A

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p> Abana, 505
 Abarim, 260
 Abdon, 456
 Abel (town), 457
 Abel (stone), 471
 Abel-beth-maachah, 347, 454
 Abel-meholah, 459
 Abel-mizraim, 456
 Abel-shittim, 475
 Abilene, 332, 500
 Abimelech, 459
 Aboukir, 213
 Abradates, 176
 Abyssinia, 528
 Abzal, 178
 Acaba or Akaba, 242, 258, 451
 Accad, 80, 147
 Accho, 456
 Achaia, 527
 Achor, valley of, 341
 Achsaph, 456
 Achzib, 456
 Acmetha, 188
 Acre, 266, 304, 433, 456
 Adam, 476
 Adam's skull, 322
 Aden, Adena, 47
 Adiabene, 121
 Adiavas, 122
 Admah, 349, 440
 Adrammelech, 64
 Adramyttium, 526 </p> | <p> Adramyti, 526
 Adria, 527
 Adullam, 329, 470
 Æmathia, 118
 Æneas, 461
 Æolians, 109
 Æthiopia, 528
 Agrida or Agri-Dagh, 73, 77
 Ahasuerus, 185
 Ahava, 169
 Ahaziah, 459
 Aijalon (in Zebulon), 457
 Aijalon (in Dan), 463
 Ailah, 259
 Ain Gidy or Jiddy, 330, 353
 Ain Shems, 203, 207
 Ajalon, valley of, 337
 Ajrud, 222
 Akka, 333, 370
 Akkar, 272
 Akkerkoof, 166
 Akra, 318, 326
 Akrabbim, 442, 451
 Albani, 112
 Albania, 527
 Aleppo, 70, 270, 277, 400, 509
 Alexandria, 63, 205
 Alexandretta, 265, 272
 Algezira, 172, 173
 Al Himar, 166
 Al Kasr, 138
 Al Katif, 51
 Alush, 251
 Alybe, 112 </p> |
|--|--|

- Amalekites, 244, 253, 446
 Amana, 286
 Amantes, 131
 Amârah, 247
 Amaris, 217
 Amaziah, 460
 Amenoph, 200
 Ammon, 199, 515
 Amorite, 313, 440, 441
 Amphipolis, 527
 Anah, 470
 Anakims, 470
 Anamim, 130
 Anathoth, 466
 Ansarian Mountains, 271
 Antakia, 508
 Antaradous, 332
 Antigonus, 177
 Antilibanus, 271
 Antioch (in Syria), 266, 507
 Antioch (in Pisidia), 508, 526
 Antipatris, 492
 Anubis, 214
 Anuchtha, 61
 Apamea, 63, 143
 Aphek, 458, 470
 Aphik, 456
 Apis, 201, 214
 Apollonia, 527
 Appii Forum, 528
 Apries, 217
 Aptuchus or Aphtucus, 131
 Ar, 518
 Araba or Arabah, 258, 367,
 451, 574
 Arabia, 240, 411
 Arabia Deserta, 262
 Arabia Petraea, 242
 Arabia Felix, 47, 242, 262
 Aracca, 80, 147
 Arad, 468
 Aradus, 444, 522
 Aram, 120
 Aram Naharaim, 120, 173
 Ararat, Mount, 59, 63
 Ararat, Little, 73
 Ararat, Kingdom of, 103
 Araxes, 59
 Arcadia, 527
 Arba, 473
 Arbâin, 255
 Archevites, 147
 Archipelago, 523, 527
 Areopagus, 527
 Aretas, 508
 Argob, 302
 Aria, 123
 Arimathea, 460, 493
 Arkite, 440, 444
 Armenia, 63, 291, 395
 Armenian Mountains, 44
 Armah, 460
 Arnon, 296, 381
 Aroer, 296, 476, 478
 Arpad, 503
 Arphas, 503
 Arphaxad, 83, 122, 189
 Arraphachitis, 122, 154
 Artabanes, 185
 Artaxerxes, 182
 Arvadite, 440, 444
 Asa, 460
 Ascania, 103
 Ashchenaz, 103
 Ashdod, 493, 511
 Asher, 304, 429, 455
 Ashtaroth, 480
 Ashtaroth-carnaim, 480
 Asia Minor, 526
 Askelon or Ascalon, 446, 510
 Asphaltites, 271, 348, 373,
 451
 Asshur, 49, 121
 Assos, 526
 Assyria, 159
 Astarte, 480
 Astyages, 189
 Athaliah, 484
 Athens, 527
 Athiras, 119
 Athor, 214
 Attâkah, 224, 230

Attalia, 526
 Attarous Jebel, 262
 Attiom, 222
 Augustamnia, 202
 Auranitis, 500
 Aven, plain of, 46, 280
 Avims, 445
 Ayûn Mûsa, 230, 245
 Azekah, 315, 470
 Azerbijan, 187
 Azmon, 451
 Azotus, 493
 Azzah, 445

B

Baalah, 474
 Baalbec, town of, 271, 509
 Baalbec, valley of, 46
 Baal-Gad, 448, 509
 Baal-hazor, 460
 Baal-Hermon, 443
 Baal-shalisha, 460
 Baal-tamar, 466
 Baal-zephon, 222
 Babel, 80, 85, 156
 Babylon, 137
 Babylonia, 44, 155, 160
 Bachur, 466
 Bactriana, 51
 Bagdat, 143
 Baharen or Bahrein, 51, 522
 Bahrurim, 466
 Balaam, 173
 Bancas, 505
 Barak, 457
 Barbary, 388, 420, 431
 Barrady, 46, 293, 505
 Barzillai, 459
 Bashan, 291, 302, 311, 480
 Bashan Hills, 483
 Bassora, 419
 Batanea, 500, 501
 Batround, 277
 Bdolach, 50
 Bedeah, 229
 Bedouin, 402
 Beer, 466
 Beeroth, 466
 Beersheba, 468
 Beisan, 335
 Bekaa, 340
 Belka, 501
 Belon, 88
 Belshazzar, 177
 Belus, 144, 168, 177, 370
 Ben Ammon, 514
 Benjamin, tribe of, 465
 Benhadad, 347, 457
 Benhennom, 339
 Beràchah, 341
 Berea, 527
 Beriah, 460
 Berothai, 509
 Besheth, 203
 Besor, 371
 Bethabara or Bethbarah, 476
 Bethanath, 457
 Bethany, 493
 Bethaven, 204
 Bethcar, 463
 Beth Eden, 46, 510
 Bethor, 478
 Bethhoron, 204, 315, 460
 Bethlehem, of Judah, 470, 493
 Bethlehem, of Zebulun, 471
 Bethpage, 494
 Beth-Rehob, 504
 Bethsaida, 344
 Bethshan, 204, 459
 Bethshemesh, 203, 204, 457, 458, 471
 Beyrout, 510
 Bezek, 458
 Bezer, 476, 483
 Bicath Aven, 280
 Bir, 510
 Birket Faroun, 234
 Bir Suweiss or Suez, 222
 Bithron, 478
 Bithynia, 104

Bitter Lakes, 209, 220
 Black Sea, 395
 Blanc, Mount, 272
 Bocat, 280
 Borsippa, 163, 166
 Bosnia, 527
 Bosphorus, 105
 Bozetha, 319
 Bozez, 328
 Bozrah, 476, 513-518
 Bubastis, 203, 204, 209, 220
 Buz, 513

C

Cabul, 456
 Cadiz, 522
 Cadmus, 111
 Cairo, 194, 201, 221, 403, 408
 Calachene, 153
 Caleb, 472
 Calneh, 49, 80, 148
 Caluchitæ, 154
 Calyo, 49
 Calubiyeh, 207
 Calvary, 322
 Cambaya, 419
 Cambyzes, 179, 217
 Camon, 480
 Cana (Galilee), 488
 Cana (tribe of Asher), 488
 Canaan (man's name), 440
 Canaan, 124, 440
 Canaanites, 440
 Canaries, 522
 Cancer, 194
 Candy, 528
 Canneh, 49
 Canobin, 289
 Capernaum, 488
 Capher-Saba, 492
 Cappadocia, 526
 Carmania, 163, 174
 Carduchian Mountains, 154,
 166
 Caria, 527

Cariotis, 202
 Carmel, Mount, 265, 304
 Carmel (town), 471
 Carnac, 200
 Carthage, 522
 Casiotis, 131
 Casius, 270
 Castravan Mountains, 404, 431
 Catharine, St, Convent of, 256
 Caucasus, 59, 64, 115, 181
 Caypha, 368
 Celtiberia, 113
 Cernain, 64
 Cenchrea, 527
 Ceth, 108
 Ceylon, 213
 Chaboras, 154, 158, 174
 Chaldea, 87, 155, 159
 Chalonitis, 148
 Chalybes, 112
 Chamia, 190
 Charrae, 158
 Charran, 156, 158
 Chasdim, 156, 164, 166
 Chautolœi, 129
 Chebar, 158
 Chedorlaomer, 181
 Chemmis, 214
 Chesed, 156
 Chilmad, 49
 China, 62
 Chinnereth, 346, 452
 Chios, 527
 Chittim, 108
 Cholobetene, 121
 Chrysorrhoas, 506
 Chul or Chol, 121
 Chusistan, 174
 Chus or Cush, 53, 80, 101,
 125, 201, 445
 Cibotus, 63
 Cilicia, 47
 Cinnereth, 346, 457
 Claudia, 528
 Cœle-Syria, 46
 Colosse, 526

Comara, 102
 Coos, 527
 Copts, 190, 398
 Coptus, 132
 Corinth (town), 527
 Corinth, gulf of, 527
 Cossœi, 59
 Crete, 291, 528
 Croatia, 527
 Ctesiphon, 49, 80, 148
 Curds, 166
 Cushan, 125
 Cyaxares, 171, 173, 189
 Cyprus, 432, 523, 528
 Cyrus, 59
 Cyteum, 108

D

Dagon, 510
 Dalmanutha, 489
 Dalmatia, 527
 Damascenus ager, 505
 Damascus, 265, 452, 504, 508
 Damascus, bar of, 46
 Damietta, 203, 212
 Dan, tribe of, 462
 Dan, town of, 347, 465
 Daniel, 178
 Daphne, 204
 Darius, 177, 199
 Deborah, 452, 461
 Debir, 472, 478
 Decreto, 511
 Dedan, 128, 513
 Delta, 192, 201
 Derbe, 526
 Desert, sea of the, 348
 Desphoul, 178
 Diana Agrestis, 203
 Diarbekr, 172
 Diavas, 122
 Diblath, 518
 Dibon, 478, 518
 Dijlat, 58

Diocæsarea, 333, 457
 Diospolis, 461
 Diouchi, 223
 Diridotis, 51
 Djebail, 277
 Djelaad, 301
 Dodanim, 106, 110
 Dodona, 111
 Doeg, 513
 Dophkah, 251
 Dor, 459
 Doran, 110
 Dorians, 110
 Dothan, 458
 Drusus, 490
 Druzes, 277
 Dũhy, 298
 Dwalagiri, 77

E

East Sea, 348
 Ebal, 315
 Eber, 83
 Ebro, 113
 Ecbatana, 174, 176, 189
 Eden, meaning of, 45
 Eden, country of, 49
 Eden, garden of, 43, 58
 Edom, 243, 259, 451, 513
 Edomites, 262
 Edrei, 480
 Egypt, 192
 Ehud, 465
 Eitch-maiadzen, 72
 Ekron, 446, 512
 Elah, 341
 Elam, 53, 174
 Elamites, 121
 Elanitic gulf, 242, 454
 Elath, 243, 259, 513
 Elath, gulf of, 519
 El-baloisa, 275
 Eleale, 518
 Elijah, 459

Elim, 249
 Elis, 110
 Elisha, 523
 Elkath, 456
 Elon, 457
 Elvah, 248
 Elymuia, 322
 Emboli, 527
 Emesa, 452
 Emims, 446, 516
 Emmaus, 494
 Endor, 456
 Engeddi, 270, 329, 442, 472
 Enoch, 61
 Enrogel, 472
 Ephes-dammim, 472
 Epiphania, 445, 507
 Ephraim, 460
 Ephratah, 471, 493
 Ephrath, 471
 Erech, 80, 147
 Erythrus, 243
 Esarhaddon, 167
 Esau, 243, 514
 Esbus, 261
 Eschol, valley of, 342
 Esdraelon, 423, 433
 Eshtaol, 463
 Esitæ, 262
 Essuan, 201
 Esther, 177
 Etam, 472
 Etesian winds, 237
 Etham, 219, 222, 244
 Eulego, 143
 Eulæus, 176, 178
 Euphrates, 44, 48, 55
 Eziongeber, 259, 513
 Ezra, 186

F

Fairhavens, 528
 Faran, 522
 Fars, 174

Farsistan, 174
 Fayûm, 207
 Felugo, 143
 Ferdoos, 45
 Fidsheh, 505
 Fuller's Fountain, 472

G

Gad, tribe of, 477
 Gad, river of, 381
 Gadara, 501
 Gadarenes, 502
 Galatæ, 105
 Galatia, 526
 Galilee, 486
 Galileans, 487
 Gallio, 527
 Gallo-Scythians, 105
 Gamala, 480
 Gamar, 102
 Gan, 346
 Ganges, 60
 Garamantes, 131
 Garra, 524
 Gath, 446, 469, 512
 Gath-hepher, 457
 Gaulonites, 381
 Gaza, 383, 440, 446, 494, 518
 Gederoth, 473
 Gemren, 105
 Gennesareth, 346
 Gentiles, isles of, 101
 George, St, 461
 Georgia, 523
 Gerar, 440, 468
 Gergesa, 443, 502
 Gergesenes, 502
 Gerizzim, 315, 483
 Gershonites, 482
 Geshur, 480, 504
 Getaræ, 121
 Gether, 121
 Gethsemane, 321, 401
 Getras, 121

Gewonbee, 225
 Ghorel, 359, 378, 451, 514
 Gibeah, 466
 Gibeon, 337, 448, 466
 Gibeonites, 465
 Gideon, 304, 459
 Ghilan, 187
 Gihon, 48, 53
 Gilboa, 304, 335, 410
 Gilead, 213, 301, 480, 501
 Gilgal, 467
 Giloh, 473
 Girschite, 440, 443
 Girondel or Ghurundel, 249
 Glace-merde, 254
 Gob, 460
 Gog, 116
 Gogarene, 115
 Gog-chasan, 115
 Golan, 480, 483
 Golgotha, 322
 Gomar, 102
 Gomorrah, 181, 318
 Gordicean Mountains, 44, 64
 Goshana, 449
 Goshen (Egypt), 206, 218
 Goshen (Israel), 448, 469
 Gozo, 528
 Gumra or Gumro, 102

H

Hadadezer, 506
 Hadadrimmon, 458
 Hadrach, 504
 Hadramaut, 213
 Hadriatic, 527
 Halak, 297, 448
 Haleb, 509
 Halon, 518
 Ham, 124
 Hama or Hamah, 277, 507
 Hamadan, 188
 Hamath, 101, 271, 443, 503,
 507
 Hamathite, 440, 445

Hammanantes, 131
 Haouran, 501, 504
 Haram, 317
 Haran, 49, 158, 265
 Harosheth, 457
 Harvest in Palestine, 382
 Hasbeya, 309
 Hattin, 333
 Hauran, 500
 Havilah, 48, 49, 244
 Havoth-jair, 481
 Hazaradar, 451
 Hazar-enam, 452
 Hazerim, 445
 Hazezon-tamar, 442, 472
 Hazeroth, 258, 445
 Hazor, 459
 Heat of Palestine, 383
 Hebron, town of, 431, 440,
 473, 483
 Hebron, valley of, 342
 Hecatompylos, 199
 Helam, 510
 Helbon, 509
 Heliopolis, 207, 509
 Hellespont, 103
 Heptanomis, 201
 Hermes, 214
 Hermon, 286, 296, 410
 Herod (Great), 513
 Heroopolis, 220
 Heshbon, 261, 476, 518
 Hesperides, garden of, 57
 Heth, 440, 441
 Hiddekel, 48, 54
 Hiel, 467
 Hierapolis, 526
 Himavan, 77
 Himmaleh Mountains, 77
 Hinnom, 317, 339
 Hiran, 277, 456
 Hittites, 441
 Hivite, 440, 443
 Hope, Good, 243
 Horeb, 254
 Hor, Mount, 297

Hor-ha-hor, 451
 Horites, 259, 446, 513
 Hoshea, 172
 Hormah, 468
 Hobah, 509
 Horonaim, 518
 Hüdëra, 258
 Hul, 121
 Hule or Huleh, 373, 504
 Humman, 249
 Hurus, 452
 Hyrcania, 187
 Hystaspes, 170, 177

I

Iberi, 112
 Iberia, 395
 Iconium, 526
 Idumea (country), 512
 Idumea (district), 503
 Ijon, 347
 Illyricum, 527
 Ionian Sea, 527
 Irak Adjemi, 87, 174
 Irak-el Araba, 160, 472
 Isis, 214
 Issachar, 307, 429
 Iturea, 500

J

Jabbok, 301, 381
 Jabesh-Gilead, 481
 Jabin, 308, 459
 Jacob, bridge of, 427
 Jaffa, 463
 Jahaz, 477
 Jahaza, 518, 477
 Jair, 302, 479, 481
 Jana, 427
 Janoah, 460
 Japhet, 100, 464
 Japho, 463

Javan, 523
 Javan's sons, 97
 Jazer, 478, 518
 Jebel-et-Tour, 307, 319
 Jebel Mûsa, 259
 Jehoshaphet, valley of, 320, 337
 Jenin, 335
 Jebus, 441, 495
 Jebusite, 440, 441
 Jephtha, 302, 459
 Jerusalem, 495
 Jethro, 245
 Jezreel, 335, 485
 Jidda, 240
 Jogbehah, 478
 Joktheel, 513
 Joppa, 463, 494
 Jor, 372
 Jordan, 371
 Jotham, 316
 Judah, tribe of, 469
 Judea, 492
 Judi, Mount, 65, 174
 Jupiter, city of, 461
 Jupiter Ammon, 199

K

Kaa, 249
 Kadesh, 473
 Kadesh-barnea, 258, 442, 451, 473
 Kalatce, 105
 Kana, 371, 456
 Kara-Su, 177
 Kareah, 200, 204
 Kasmia, 272
 Katim, 523
 Kedar, 262
 Kedem, 68
 Kedemoth, 477
 Kadesh, 457, 483
 Kedma, 68
 Keilah, 473

Keltæ, 105
 Kenath, 481
 Kenkri, 527
 Kerman, 174
 Kerrah, 177
 Kesed, 166
 Kesruan, 273, 277
 Keturah, 263
 Keturah, sons of, 76
 Khuzestan, 61
 Kibroth-hattaavah, 258
 Kidron, 318
 Kir-Aroer, 518
 Kirjathaim, 477, 518
 Kirjath-Arba, 473
 Kirjath-baal, 474
 Kirjath-jearim, 474
 Kirjath-Sannah, 472
 Kirjath-Sepher, 472
 Kishon, 336, 368, 490
 Kittim, 106, 108
 Kitron, 457
 Kohath, 473
 Kohathites, 482
 Korah, 258
 Kotchivan, valley of, 72
 Krio, Cape, 527
 Kurdistan, 168
 Kuros, 169
 Kymr, 102, 106

L

Laban, 424
 Lachish, 474
 Laish, 465
 Laodicea, 526
 Larissa, 154
 Lasea, 528
 Lasha, 440
 Lasharon, 460
 Lebanon Proper, 271
 Lebanon, valley, 271
 Lebar, 460
 Lebonah, 460

Ledjah or Lejael, 255, 500
 Lehabim, 131
 Leonidas, 185
 Lesbos, 527
 Levant, 197
 Levi, tribe of, 481
 Libanus, 271, 431
 Libnah, 126, 419, 474,
 Libya, 190
 Livies, 261
 Lodebar, 478
 Longimanus, 185
 Lud, 130
 Luxor, 200
 Luz, 466
 Lycia, 526
 Lycus, 152, 169
 Lycaonia, 526
 Lydia, 130, 526
 Lyeurgus, 211
 Lydda, 461, 495
 Lysanias, 500

M

Maanah, 330
 Maarsares, 139
 Macedonia, 527
 Machærus, 502
 Machir, 302
 Macis, 73
 Madai, 116
 Maesians, 118
 Magdala, 487
 Magdolus or Magdolum, 125,
 206
 Magi, 165
 Magini, 115
 Magog, 113
 Magogini, 115
 Mahanaim, 478
 Makedah, 308, 474
 Malabar, 213
 Malta, 528
 Mamelukes, 217

- Manasseh, east half tribe of, 430
 Manasseh, west half tribe of 459
 Maon, 469, 474
 Marathon, 134
 Mareotis, 202
 Mareshah, 474
 Mar-Hannah, 275
 Mars Hill, 527
 Marra, 272
 Mash, 65, 174
 Masins, 65, 174
 Matarriyeh, 207
 Mecca, 241, 417
 Medeba, 477, 518
 Medes, 116
 Media, 187
 Media (Great), 187
 Megiddo, 335, 369, 459
 Melchizedek, 495
 Melita, 328
 Memphis, 201, 214, 221
 Memphitis, 198
 Menahem, 172
 Mendesian, Lake, 205
 Mendes, 214
 Menu, 77
 Menahem, 172
 Menzala, 203, 212
 Merari, 308
 Merarites, 482
 Meribah, 253
 Merj-Ibn-Amir, 335
 Meroe, 128
 Merom, Lake, 373
 Mesopotamia, 77, 159, 173
 Mesha, 123
 Meshech, 112, 114
 Messagetæ, 182
 Michmash, 467
 Midian, 518
 Midianites, 518
 Migdol, 125, 201, 205, 222
 Mikedem, 69
 Millo, 497
 Minea, 514
 Minni, 103
 Minnith, 435, 479
 Misrephoth-maim, 456
 Miriam, 258
 Mispah or Mizpeh, 302, 467
 479
 Mishol, 456
 Misr, 192
 Mitylene, 527
 Mizraim, 124, 445
 Moab, 301, 412
 Moloch, 339
 Morea, 527
 Moreh, plain of, 337, 483
 Moriah, 317, 326
 Moschi, 112
 Moschian Hills, 72
 Moscow, 114
 Mosul, 419
 Mûkuttah, 368
 Mukattel, 252
 Murbania, 399
 Mûsa Jebel, 256
 Muscovites, 114
 Myra, 526
 Mysia, 526
- N
- Naaman, 506
 Nabal, 306, 439
 Nabathæans, 244, 262
 Nablous, 436
 Nabopalassar, 167
 Nabuzaradan, 461
 Nahalol, 457
 Nahr-Kadisha, 281
 Nahr-Kasah, 371
 Nahr-Malca, 139
 Nain, 490
 Naphtali, tribe of, 346, 456
 Naphtali, hills of, 483
 Naphtahim, 131
 Napoli, 527

Naubandhana, 78
 Nazamones, 130
 Nazarenes, 130
 Nazareth, 490
 Neapolis, 527
 Nebo, mount, 260
 Nebo, town of, 477
 Nebuzaradan, 461
 Nechus and Necho, 217
 Nekoura, 265
 Nicopolis, 527
 Niester, 119
 Niger, 413
 Nile, 60, 193
 Nilometers, 211
 Nimrod, 133, 159
 Nineveh, 169, 173
 Ninus, 135
 Nisibis, 84, 157
 Nisroch, 64
 No, 199, 200
 Noachidæ, 69, 95
 Nob, 467
 Nobah, 487
 Nod, 59
 Nomi, 198
 Noph, 201, 202
 Nysa, 62

O

Og, 302
 Olives, mount of, 319
 Omri, 461, 485
 On, 203
 Ophir, 259
 Oreb, 476
 Orfa, 158
 Ormus, 240
 Orontes, 272, 445
 Orthosia, 445
 Osiris, 214
 Ossian, peak of, 272
 Othniel, 470

P

Padan-Aram, 173
 Palestine, 264
 Pallacopas, 139
 Palmyra, 262, 509
 Pamphylia, 526
 Paneas, 372
 Panion, 372
 Pannag, 435
 Paphlagonia, 104
 Paphos, 528
 Paran, wilderness of, 244
 Parthia, 528
 Pasargada, 162
 Pasitigris, 162
 Patara, 526
 Pathros, 101, 198, 200
 Pathrusium, 131
 Pathurites, 198
 Pathyris, 131
 Patmos, 527
 Patumos, 209
 Peleg, 83
 Pella, 501, 502
 Peloponnesus, 527
 Pelusium, 203
 Peniel or Penuel, 479
 Perath, 48
 Perea, 500
 Perea Proper, 501
 Perga, 526
 Persepolis, 162, 178
 Persia, 174, 413, 425
 Pharaoh-Hophrah, 217
 Pharaoh Necho, 167, 217, 336
 Phases, 59
 Pharphar, 505
 Phaturites, 198
 Phiala, 372
 Phibeseth, 220
 Philadelphus, Ptolemy, 456
 Philadelphia, 526
 Philippi, 527
 Philippopolis, 476
 Philistia, 342, 510

Philistines, 264, 445
 Philae, 130
 Phoenicia, 519
 Phœnicum oppidum, 522
 Phraortes, 189
 Phrygia, 526
 Phthah, 214
 Phut, 130, 132
 Pi-hahiroth, 220, 222
 Piræus, 489
 Pisgah, 260
 Pisidia, 526
 Pison, 48, 52
 Pithom, 207
 Plain, sea of the, 348
 Plateæa, 185
 Pontus, 526
 Pozzuoli, 528
 Psammeticus, 217
 Ptolemais, 456, 489
 Pul, 172
 Puteoli, 528
 Pyrenees, 272
 Pythagoras, 211
 Pythias, 185

Q

Quarantana, 306

R

Raamah, 49, 52
 Rabbah, 515
 Rabshakeh, 169, 173
 Rahab, 168
 Râhah, 242, 255, 257
 Rain, 384, 385
 Rain in harvest, 386
 Rainy season, 386
 Rakka, 159
 Rama or Ramah, 429, 433,
 460
 Ramathaim, 460

Ramleh, 493
 Ramoth-Gilead, 479, 483
 Rasalhat cape, 240
 Ras-en Nakûra, 332
 Reggio, 528
 Rehob (a chief), 505
 Rehob (a town), 456
 Rehoboth, 153, 509
 Remtha, 504
 Rephat, 103
 Rephaim, 342, 446
 Rephidim, 244
 Resetha, 509
 Reuben, tribe of, 475
 Rezech, 509
 Rezin, 508
 Rezon, 505
 Rhebæus, 104
 Rhegium, 528
 Rhegma, 128
 Rhisina, 154
 Rhodes, 527
 Rhodians, 111
 Rhinocolura, 371, 451
 Riblah, Riblath, or Ribleh,
 452
 Rimmon, 316, 328
 Riphatea, 104
 River (of Egypt), 451
 Rizpah, 386
 Rogelim, 484
 Rome, 528
 Rosh, 114
 Rûdherâh Wady, 254

S

Sabana, 127
 Sabe, 127
 Sabians, 158
 Sabæans, 263
 Sabtah, 129
 Safauz, 457
 Sahara, 413
 Salah, 83

- Salamini, 528
 Salamis, 185, 528
 Salchah, 481
 Salim, or Shalim, 459
 Salmanazar, 167, 172
 Salmon, 314
 Salmone, 528
 Saloniki, 527
 Salt (sea), 343, 348
 Samandrachi, 527
 Samareans, 445
 Samaria, 461, 491
 Samos, 527
 Samothracia, 527
 Samuel, 461
 Sannin, 278, 523
 Saocoras, 154
 Saphtha, 129
 Saracens, 51, 129
 Sar, 346
 Sarak, 129
 Sardis, 103
 Sardanapalus, 173, 185
 Schirrey, 287
 Schoham, 52
 Scythia, 528
 Scythopolis, 304
 Sea, Red, 49
 Sebenetic, 203
 Seed-time (Palestine), 382
 Seir, 259, 297
 Selah, 513
 Seleucia, 507
 Seleucidæ, 108
 Seleucus Nicator, 567
 Slavonia, 527
 Semichonitis, 373
 Semiramis, 163, 188
 Senaar, 402, 414, 424
 Seneh, 328
 Senite, 440, 444
 Sennacherib, 417
 Sephar, 123
 Sephûrieh, 333
 Sepphoris, 333, 347
 Servia, 527
 Sesostriis, 200, 216
 Settace, 147
 Sharezer, 64
 Sharon, 204, 307, 344
 Shat-el-arab, 58, 162
 Sheba, 49, 52
 Shechem, 314, 461, 481
 Sheik-wady-esh, 256
 Shellah wady, 252
 Shemen, 64
 Shemesh, 203
 Shenar, 286, 296
 Shepham, 452
 Sherah, 466
 Shiloh, 461
 Shimron, 457
 Shinar, 159, 361
 Shirwan, 187
 Shouair, 275
 Shouster, 176
 Shunem, 459
 Shur, 48, 221, 245
 Shurkiyeh, 207
 Shushan, 53, 176
 Shuweib wady, 255
 Sibmah, 477, 518
 Sicyonia, 527
 Siddim, 181, 341, 348
 Sidon (man's name), 440
 Sidon, 382, 518
 Sidonians, 510
 Sihor-Libnath, 191, 370
 Sihor, southern, 371
 Siloam, 318
 Simeon, tribe of, 467
 Simoom, 417
 Simyra, 445
 Sin, 244
 Sinai, Mount, 256
 Sinai, wilderness of, 244
 Singaris mons, or Sindsjar, 81,
 82
 Sion, 496
 Sirion, 296
 Sittacene, 147
 Sodom, sea of, 348

Sodom, apple of, 359
 Solon, 211
 Sook, 280
 Sorek, river, 371
 Sorek, valley of, 342
 Strymon, 527
 Succoth, 219, 460, 479
 Süddüd, 452
 Suez, 207, 222, 403
 Susa, 53, 176, 185
 Susiana, 61, 122, 174, 176
 Suza, 371
 Sychar, 461, 492
 Sychem, 461, 483, 494
 Syene, 125, 200, 206
 Syphax, 416
 Syracuse, 528
 Syria, 481, 523
 Syria Proper, 503

T

Taanach, 361
 Taaneh-Tiphsah-Tirzah, 459
 Tabaria, 491
 Tabor, 297
 Tabyle, 112
 Tadmor, 262, 509
 Talmai, 480
 Tamar (woman's name), 464
 Tamar (town), 509
 Tanaiticum ostium, 221, 351
 Tanis, 221
 Taphanes, 204
 Taphne, 204
 Tarshish, 464
 Tarsus, 106
 Tartan, 199
 Tartessus, 107
 Taurus, 64
 Teblis, 523
 Teflis, 523
 Tekoah, 330, 474
 Tel-abib, 174
 Tel-Basta, 203
 Telaim, 475

Telem, 475
 Tell-el-kady, 372
 Teman, 513
 Terebinth vale, 341
 Teredon, 51
 Thadmor, 509
 Thebes, 191, 216
 Thebez, 462
 Themana, 64
 Thennesum, 205
 Thessalonica, 527
 Thessaly, 527
 Thobeli, 112
 Thoth, 214
 Thrax, 118
 Three Taverns, 528
 Tibareni, 112
 Tiberias, town of, 491
 Tiberias, lake of, 310, 343, 500, 508
 Tiglath-pileser, 172, 189, 457
 Tih, 242
 Tigris, 53
 Tineh, 203
 Timnath, 464
 Timnath-serah, 462
 Tiras, 118
 Tirzah, 484
 Tisbe, 481
 Togarmah, 104
 Tophet, 337
 Tor, 234
 Torah, 223
 Toumilat, 207
 Tripoli, 266, 278, 382, 429, 434
 Trachonitis, 301, 500
 Transfiguration, mount of, 310
 Trajan's River, 440
 Troas, 526
 Trochmi, 106
 Tsour, 524
 Tubal, 112
 Tyre, 519
 Tyrus, 101
 Tyropæon, 317

U	Z
Ulai, 176, 178	Zaan, 205
Ur, 84, 155	Zaanaïm, 483
Urchoa, 157	Zab, 169
Ur-Chasdim, 157	Zalmunnah, 481
Utica, 522	Zam, 82
Uz, 120, 513	Zama, 82
	Zamzummims, 446
	Zarthan, 459
V	Zebah, 481
Venice, gulf of, 527	Zeboim, 349, 440
Venus, 214	Zebulun, 419, 332, 433, 457
Volcanoes, 427	Zedad, 452
	Zeel, 476
	Zemaraim, 445, 467
	Zemarite, 440, 445
W	Zenodorus, 500
White Mountains, 284	Zephath, 468
	Zereda, 462
	Zidon, 101, 429
X	Ziklag, 468
Xisuthrus, 77	Zin, 442, 451, 469
	Ziph, 469, 475
	Zoan, 205, 221
	Zoar, 351
	Zobah, 505
Y	Zobahites, 505
Yâfa, 463	Zorah, 465
Yemen, 47, 523	Zoroaster, 180
	Zuzims, 446

INDEX

OF

PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE QUOTED OR ILLUSTRATED.

GENESIS.

Chap.	Verse.	Page.	Chap.	Verse.	Page.
ii.	19.	92.	xxii.		328.
iii.	24.	69.	xxii.	2, 4.	319.
iv.	11, 12.	61.	xxii.	22.	156.
iv.	16.	46.	xxiii.	2, 7.	441, 473.
iv.	25.	93.	xxv.	15.	501.
vi.	14.	78.	xxv.	18.	48.
viii.	4.	63.	xxvi.	12.	435.
ix.	18, 24.	99, 150.	xxvii.	39.	514.
x.	4.	111.	xxviii.		466.
x.	5.	97, 101.	xxix.		173.
x.	10, 11, 14.	80, 131, 149.	xxxi.	40.	403.
x.	18.	504.	xxxi.	49, 50.	301, 479.
x.	19.	441.	xxxii.	2.	479.
x.	23.	174.	xxxii.	3, 22.	382.
x.	30.	123.	xxxii.	30.	479.
xi.	2, 3.	65, 95.	xxxiii.	17.	480.
xi.	2, 4, 5, 6, 9.	80, 83, 85, 86.	xxxiv.		461.
xi.	10-16.	83, 100, 131.	xxxv.	16.	471.
xii.	6.	337.	xxxvi.	20.	260.
xii.	8.	69.	xxxvi.	31, 43.	514.
xiii.	7.	441.	xxxvi.	37.	153, 509.
xiii.	10.	348, 350.	xxxvii.	25.	302.
xiv.	1.	181.	xxxvii.	27, 28.	458.
xiv.	3.	348.	xxxvii.		518.
xiv.	7.	472.	xxxviii.	10.	466.
xiv.	15.	508, 509.	xxxviii.	12.	464.
xv.	2.	508.	xli.	45.	203.
xix.	24.	348, 361.	xlvi.	11.	207.
xix.	30.	330.	xlix.	12.	429.
xxi.	27.	468.	i.	11.	466.

EXODUS.

i.	14.	269.	xv.	22.	49, 222.
ii.	15-22.	518.	xv.	27.	249.
ix.	24, 25.	394.	xvi.	14, 31.	50, 251.
xi.	2.	208.	xvii.	1.	244.
xii.	13, 22.	208.	xvii.	8, 14.	244.
xiii.	20.	221.	xviii.	1.	518.
xiv.	2, 3.	222.	xix.	12.	257.
xiv.	11, 12, 21-23.	231.			

LEVITICUS.

Chap.	Vers.	Page.	Chap.	Vers.	Page.
ii.	11.	433.	xxv.	10.	454.

NUMBERS.

xi.	3.	258.	xxvi.	14.	468.
xi.	5.	208.	xxvi.	22.	470.
xi.	7.	50.	xxvi.	34.	450.
xi.	8, 9.	251.	xxvi.	41.	465.
xi.	31.	250.	xxvi.	43.	463.
xiii.	3.	473.	xxxi.		245, 518.
xiii.	21.	504.	xxxii.	1-5.	475, 476.
xiii.	22.	205, 473.	xxxii.	33.	311.
xiii.	29.	441, 444.	xxxii.	34.	478.
xiv.	33, 45.	258.	xxxii.	35.	478.
xvi.		258.	xxxii.	37.	477.
xx.	5.	208.	xxxiii.		476.
xx.	17.	514.	xxxiii.	6.	221.
xx.	13.	480.	xxxiii.	8.	232.
xxi.	1, 13.	442, 468.	xxxiii.	12, 13.	244, 251.
xxi.	21, 23.	476, 477.	xxxiii.	16.	253.
xxi.	33.	480.	xxxiii.	51-55.	453.
xxii.		245, 516, 518.	xxxiv.	5.	371.
xxiv.		516.	xxxiv.	7, 8.	297.
xxv.		245.	xxxiv.	11.	346.
xxv.	1-3.	517.	xxxvi.	6, 7.	221, 454.
xxv.		476.			

DEUTERONOMY.

i.	4.	442, 480.	x.	8, 9.	481.
i.	7.	442.	xi.	10-19.	208.
i.	28.	85.	xi.	11.	208.
ii.	9.	515, 516.	xi.	14.	404.
ii.	11, 12.	259, 516.	xi.	30.	421.
ii.	23.	132, 445.	xv.	1-12.	454.
ii.	26.	381, 477.	xxi.	17.	450.
ii.	37.	381.	xxiii.	3.	516.
iii.	4, 14.	480.	xxiii.	4.	173.
iii.	8, 9.	296.	xxvii.	12, 13.	316.
iii.	10.	481.	xxviii.	11.	438.
iii.	13-15.	302.	xxviii.	24.	415.
iii.	16.	381.	xxix.	23, 24.	361.
iii.	17.	346, 348.	xxix.	23.	349.
iv.	47, 48.	296, 476, 478.	xxxii.	2.	410.
iv.	49.	343.	xxxii.	7, 8.	97, 450.
viii.	7, 8.	435.	xxxii.	13.	327, 430.
viii.	9.	278.	xxxii.	37.	328.
viii.	15.	253.	xxxii.	40.	260.
ix.	1.	85.	xxxiii.	13.	409.
ix.	21.	253.	xxxiv.	1.	261.
x.	22.	258.			

JOSHUA.

Chap.	Verse.	Page.	Chap.	Verse.	Page.
i.	4.	421.	xv.	5.	348.
iii.	16.	376.	xv.	8, 15, 16, 49.	342, 372.
iv.	9.	467.	xv.	30, 31.	468.
v.	9-10.	467.	xv.	33, 35.	463, 470.
vi.		467.	xv.	53.	470.
vii.		466.	xv.	55.	307.
x.	10-11.	315, 394, 470.	xvii.	9.	371.
x.	12.	337, 466, 474.	xvii.	11.	458.
x.	5.	474.	xvii.	16.	335.
x.	33, 41.	448, 460.	xviii.	1.	461, 465.
xi.	3.	441.	xviii.	8, 10.	462.
xi.	8.	456.	xix.	1.	117.
xi.	17.	271, 297.	xix.	4.	468.
xi.	21.	470.	xix.	17-23.	367.
xii.	3.	348.	xix.	26.	370.
xii.	5.	481.	xix.	32.	457.
xii.	15.	470.	xix.	33.	483.
xii.	18.	460.	xix.	35.	346.
xiii.	5.	297, 451, 504.	xix.	37.	483.
xiii.	9.	478.	xix.	41.	463.
xiii.	16.	476, 477, 478.	xix.	46.	463.
xiii.	17.	476.	xix.	49.	462.
xiii.	18.	477.	xx.	8.	476.
xiii.	21.	518.	xxi.	37.	477.
xiii.	26.	478.	xxiv.	2.	158.
xiii.	30.	481.	xxiv.	30.	462.
xiv.	12, 13.	433, 473.	xxiv.	32.	461.
xv.	24.	475.			

JUDGES.

i.	17.	468.	ix.	21.	466.
i.	31.	456.	ix.	47-49.	315.
i.	33.	457.	ix.	53.	462.
iii.	3.	443, 455, 504.	x.	5.	480.
iii.	8.	173.	xi.	11.	479.
iii.	9.	470.	xi.		302, 515.
iii.	14.	517.	xi.	33.	478.
iii.	28.	377.	xii.	6.	377.
iv.	11.	483.	xii.	11.	458.
iv.	2, 10, 16.	457, 458.	xii.	12.	457.
iv.	6, 14.	336, 308.	xii.	14.	468.
v.	17.	455.	xiii.	15-20.	328.
v.	19, 20.	369, 459.	xiii.	2.	465.
vi.		246, 519.	xv.	8.	328.
vi.	19, 21.	328.	xv.	30, 31.	468.
vi.	33.	336.	xvi.	4.	371.
vi.	35.	458.	xvi.	31.	463.
vii.		244, 246, 519.	xviii.		465.
vii.	22.	459.	xviii.	7.	519.
vii.	24.	476.	xix.	4, 5.	468.
viii.	11.	478, 481.	xix.	16.	466.
viii.		246, 519.	xx.	33.	466.
viii.	16, 17.	479, 480.	xx.	45, 47.	316, 328, 465.
ix.		461.	xxi.	19.	460, 462.
ix.	7.	316.	xxi.	8-13.	454.

RUTH.

Chap.	Verse.	Page.	Chap.	Verse.	Page.
i.	1.	471.			

1 SAMUEL.

i.	1, 19.	460.	xv.	7.	48, 244.
i.	9-18.	462.	xv.	12.	472.
iii.		462.	xvi.	1-4.	470, 471.
iv.		461, 470.	xvii.	1.	470, 472.
v.	2-8.	510.	xxi.	1-6.	467.
v.	9, 10.	510.	xxi.	7.	513.
vi.	18.	471.	xxii.	3.	479.
vii.	1.	474.	xxii.	1, 2.	329, 470.
vii.	11.	463.	xxii.	9-19.	467.
ix.	4.	459.	xxiii.		474.
x.	1.	467.	xxiii.	25.	328.
x.	17-24.	467, 479.	xxiv.	1, 2, 15.	330, 367, 468, 472.
xi.	1.	302.	xxv.	2.	306, 307, 472.
xi.	8, 15.	458, 467.	xxvii.	6.	469.
xii.	16.	385.	xxviii.	4.	459.
xiv.	4.	328, 467.	xxix.	1.	458.
xiv.	25, 26, 31.	430, 463.	xxx.	1-9.	371.
xiv.	47.	504.	xxx.		244.
xv.		244, 467.	xxxi.	10.	459.
xv.	4.	475.			

2 SAMUEL.

i.	19-21.	304, 410.	x.	16-19.	173, 510.
ii.	8.	479.	xi.	1.	515.
ii.	12-17.	467.	xii.	26.	515.
ii.	29.	478.	xiii.	37.	481.
iii.	3.	307.	xiv.		475.
iv.	12.	473.	xv.	12.	473.
v.	9.	497.	xv.	23.	337.
v.	22.	342.	xv.	30.	320.
viii.	2.	517.	xvii.	12, 23.	410, 473.
viii.	3.	504.	xvii.	27.	481.
viii.	5.	504, 508.	xvii.		479.
viii.	8.	509.	xviii.		479.
viii.	9.	504, 507.	xx.	10.	467.
viii.	13.	87.	xx.	14.	457.
viii.	14.	514.	xxi.	10.	386.
ix.	4.	478.	xxi.	18.	460.
x.	2.	515.	xxiv.	2-15.	468.
x.	6.	504.	xxiv.	5.	381.
x.	15.	504.			

I. KINGS.

i.	9.	472.	ix.	16.	460.
ii.	26.	468.	ix.	13.	456.
iv.	13.	480.	ix.	15.	497.
iv.	7-19.	484.	ix.	18.	509.
v.	15-18.	277.	ix.	26.	260, 513.
vii.	46.	340, 460, 480.	x.	4, 5.	497.

Chap.	Verse.	Page.	Chap.	Verse.	Page.
x.	22.	108.	xv.	13.	337.
xi.	7.	517.	xv.	17, 22.	461.
xi.	12.	484.	xv.	20.	346, 347, 457.
xi.	24.	508.	xvi.	9, 23.	459.
xi.	25.	505.	xvi.	24.	461.
xi.	26.	462.	xvi.	34.	467.
xii.	17.	484.	xvii.	1.	408.
xii.	21.	484.	xviii.	19.	328.
xii.	25.	461, 479.	xviii.	45.	412.
xii.	26-33.	485.	xix.	16.	459.
xii.	29.	465.	xx.	26-30.	456.
xiv.	2.	462.	xxii.	48.	108, 259.
xiv.	17.	459.			

II. KINGS.

iii.	16, 17.	412.	xvii.	3, 6, 24.	53, 172, 493, 504, 507.
vi.	18.	458.	xvii.	31-38.	485.
viii.	22.	474.	xviii.	17.	474.
ix.	1-10.	479.	xviii.	32.	70, 169.
ix.	27.	459.	xviii.	34.	504, 507.
ix.	16-37.	459.	xviii.	9-11.	172.
xi.	1-3.	485.	xix.	7.	418.
xii.	20.	497.	xix.	9.	126.
xiv.	7.	341, 513.	xix.	12.	46, 509.
xiv.	9.	292.	xix.	23.	306.
xiv.	25.	457.	xix.	35-37.	173.
xiv.	28.	507.	xxiii.	6-12.	337-339.
xv.	19.	172.	xxiv.		168.
xv.	29.	172, 457, 460.	xxiv.	2.	517.
xvi.	9.	172.			

I. CHRONICLES.

i.	31.	501.	xii.	15.	375.
ii.	23.	481.	xii.	33.	458.
ii.	24.	475.	xiii.		474.
iv.	21-23.	212.	xvi.	9.	342.
v.	1.	459.	xvi.	5.	342.
v.	19.	501.	xvi.	39.	467.
vi.	77.	308.	xvii.	3.	341.
vii.	24.	460.	xviii.	11.	513.
xi.	4.	495.	xxvi.	16.	497.
xi.	15.	342.	xxvii.	29.	460.
xi.	18.	472.			

II. CHRONICLES.

i.	3, 12.	467.	xiv.	9.	126, 474.
viii.	4.	509.	xv.	9.	460.
viii.	5.	460.	xvii.	11.	263.
ix.	11.	497.	xviii.	3.	479.
xi.	6.	473, 475.	xix.	4.	468.
xi.	7.	470.	xx.	2.	442, 472.
xi.	9.	474.	xx.	20-24.	475.
xi.	10-12.	484.	xx.	21.	341.
xi.	13-17.	484.	xx.	22.	517.
xii.	3.	127.	xxv.	11.	341.
xiii.		467.	xxv.	13.	460.
xiv.	8.	433.	xxv.	23.	471.

Chap.	Vers.	Page.	Chap.	Vers.	Page.
xxvi.	10.	472.	xxxii.	5.	497.
xxviii.	3.	339.	xxxv.	20.	217.
xxviii.	18.	463, 473.	xxxv.	22-24.	335, 336, 458.
xxix.	16.	337.	xxxvi.	21.	485.
xxx.	11.	458.	xxxvi.	23.	182.
xxx.	14.	337.			

EZRA.

i.	2.	182.	vi.		184.
iv.	6.	182.	vi.	2.	188.
iv.	7.	183.	vi.	12, 14.	179.
iv.	9-16.	147, 182.	viii.	31.	160.
v.		184.	x.	9, 13.	387.

ESTHER

i.	5.	177.	i.	14.	179.
i.	10.	179.	vii.	12-14.	179.

JOB.

ii.	11.	513.	xxix.	23.	404.
xxiv.	8.	328.	xxxii.	2.	513.
xxix.	2, 19, 20.	392.	xxxvii.	6.	389.

PSALMS.

xi.	6.	426.	lxxviii.	12, 43.	205, 221.
xix.	4.	90.	lxxxii.	16.	430, 435.
xxii.	12.	314.	lxxxiii.	9.	246, 519.
xxiii.	2.	390.	lxxxiii.	13.	414.
xxix.	4-6.	293.	lxxxix.	12.	297, 308.
xxxi.	2, 3.	328.	xcii.	12.	292.
xxxvii.	4.	384.	ciii.	16.	418.
xlvi.	1.	287.	cv.	40.	250.
xlvi.	2, 3, 5.	319, 427.	cv.	41.	253.
xlvi.	2, 6.	326.	cx.	3.	411.
lx.	6.	480.	cxiv.	6.	427.
lxvii.	1.	287.	cxxii.	3.	326.
lxviii.	12.	87.	cxxv.	2.	319, 325.
lxviii.	14.	315.	cxxxiii.	3.	297, 301, 410.
lxviii.	15.	311.	cxxxv.	7.	423.
lxxii.	10.	127.	cxxxvii.	1.	139.
lxxii.	16.	295.	cxlvii.	14.	435.
lxxvii.	16.	238.	cxlvii.	16, 17.	395.

PROVERBS.

i.	26, 27.	416.	xxv.	14.	412.
xvi.	15.	404, 405.	xxvi.	1.	386.

ECCLESIASTES.

ii.	5.	45.	xi.	4.	388.
-----	----	-----	-----	----	------

SONG OF SOLOMON.

Chap.	Verse.	Page.	Chap.	Verse.	Page.
i.	14.	472.	iv.	15.	288.
ii.	1.	460.	iv.	16.	420.
ii.	3.	384.	vi.	4.	459.
ii.	10.	399.	vii.	4.	292, 477.
iv.	8.	286.	vii.	5.	305.
iv.	11.	289.	viii.	2.	291.
iv.	13.	45.			

ISAIAH.

i.	29.	57.	xxvi.	19.	410.
ii.	2.	295.	xxix.	17.	285.
ii.	10-13.	312.	xxx.	4.	205.
ii.	13.	291.	xxxii.	2.	384.
ii.	19.	329.	xxxiii.	16.	328.
viii.	4.	508.	xxxiv.	10.	515.
ix.	1.	486.	xxxv.	1, 2, 6, 7.	294, 438, 460.
x.	9.	148.	xxxvii.	8.	474.
xi.	11.	80, 101, 198, 200.	xxxvii.	12.	46, 158.
xlii.	17.	189.	xxxvii.	24.	285.
xlii.	19.	142.	xxxvii.	36.	419.
xiv.	4.	141.	xxxvii.	38.	63.
xv.	2.	477.	xl.	16.	294.
xvi.	8.	477.	xl.	24.	414.
xvii.	5.	342.	xli.	25.	182.
xviii.	1.	126.	xlii.	14.	162.
xviii.	2.	212.	xlii.	1.	145.
xviii.	7.	195.	xlii.	28.	182.
xix.	2.	195.	xlii.	1.	182.
xix.	11.	205.	xlii.	2.	138.
xix.	13.	201.	xlii.	1.	145, 477.
xx.	1.	199.	xlii.	5, 7, 8.	141.
xx.	6.	101.	xlii.	13.	165.
xxi.	1, 2.	161, 189.	lvii.	7.	328.
xxii.	6.	181.	lxiii.	12.	87.
xxiii.	1.	106.	lxiv.	1-3.	437.
xxiii.	7, 12.	520.	lxv.	3.	57.
xxiv.	1.	427.	lxvi.	17.	57.
			lxvi.	19.	130.

JEREMIAH.

i.	1.	466.	xix.	1-11.	340.
i.	25.	145.	xxv.	22.	101.
ii.	6.	439.	xxv.	20, 23.	513.
ii.	8.	191.	xxvi.	20.	474.
iii.	3.	404.	xxix.	10-14.	485.
iv.	15.	465.	xxxi.	15.	461.
iv.	29.	328.	xxxiv.	7.	474.
v.	6.	287.	xxxvi.	22.	401.
v.	24.	404.	xxxvi.	30.	426.
vii.	31.	339.	xxxvii.		217.
viii.	20.	407.	xl.	1.	461.
viii.	22.	302.	xl.	6.	467.
x.	13.	423.	xli.	1-10.	467.
xiii.	23.	127.	xlii.	7.	205.
xvii.	5, 6.	362.	xlii.	8, 13.	201, 203.
xviii.	14.	288.	xlii.	9.	204.

Chap.	Verse.	Page.	Chap.	Verse.	Page.
xliv.	1.	198, 200, 205.	xlix.		477.
xliv.	30.	217.	xlix.	7, 20.	513.
xlvi.	8.	195.	xlix.	14.	328.
xlvi.	9.	130.	xlix.	19.	376.
xlvi.	11.	302.	xlix.	35.	181.
xlvi.	18.	310.	l.	19.	314.
xlvi.	25.	190.	l.	21.	145.
xlvi.	4.	132.	l.	23, 42.	141, 189.
xlvi.		477.	li.	11, 23.	189.
xlvi.	1.	477.	li.	20.	141.
xlvi.	9, 42.	517.	li.	25.	427.
xlvi.	18.	478.	li.	27.	103.
xlvi.	24.	476.	li.	28.	427.
xlvi.	32.	477, 478.	lii.	27.	168.

LAMENTATIONS.

iv.	12.	328.	iv.	21.	513.
-----	-----	------	-----	-----	------

EZEKIEL.

i.	1, 3.	174.	xxvii.	22, 23.	49, 52, 127, 128, 148, 159.
iii.	15, 23.	174.	xxix.	10.	125, 200.
x.	15, 22.	174.	xxix.	14, 15.	198, 200, 218.
xiii.	11.	387.	xxix.	18.	168.
xvii.	4.	162.	xxx.	6, 13, 14,	126, 199, 201, 203, 205, 217.
xviii.	6.	328.	xxxii.	26.	113.
xxi.	20.	515.	xxxiii.	30.	398.
xxv.	13.	513.	xxxv.		515.
xxv.		168.	xxxviii.	2.	115.
xxv.	10.	516.	xxxviii.	6.	104.
xxv.		515.	xxxviii.	13.	127.
xxvi.	3-5, 14, 21.	525.	xxxix.	17, 18.	314.
xxvii.	6.	313.	xlvi.	16.	501.
xxvii.	12.	107.	xlvi.	18.	348, 504.
xxvii.	13.	113.	xlvi.	1.	452.
xxvii.	14.	104.			
xxvii.	17.	479.			
xxvii.	18.	52, 509.			

DANIEL.

i.	1, 2.	81, 160.	v.	11.	165.
i.	4.	168.	vii.	2.	413.
i.	20.	165.	viii.	2.	53, 181.
ii.	2.	165.	x.	20.	169.
iv.	7.	165.	xi.	2.	169.
iv.	30.	88, 137.	xi.	30.	169.

HOSEA.

iv.	15.	467.	x.	5.	466.
v.	1.	310.	xi.	8.	349.
vi.	3.	404.	xii.	11.	479.
vi.	4.	391, 411.	xiii.	3.	391.
vi.	8.	479.	xiv.	6, 7.	289.
ix.	6.	201.			

JOEL.

Chap.	Vers.	Page.	Chap.	Vers.	Page.
ii.	29.	348.	iii.	2.	338.
ii.	23.	404, 406.			

AMOS.

i.	1.	475.	iv.	4, 5.	467.
i.	2.	307.	iv.	7, 8.	406.
i.	3, 13.	302.	vi.	1, 2.	148.
i.	5.	46, 280, 510.	vi.	14.	371.
ii.	9.	313.	ix.	2, 3.	306.
iv.	1.	314.			

OBADIAH.

3.	328.
----	------

JONAH.

i.	3.	421.	iv.	11.	153.
----	----	------	-----	-----	------

MICAH.

i.	3.	427.	v.	2.	471.
i.	15.	470.	v.	6.	151.
iii.	12.	319.	vii.	14.	306, 313.

NAHUM.

i.	5.	427.	iii.	1, 4.	171.
i.	8, 10.	152, 171, 199.	iii.	11-17.	171.
ii.	6.	171.			

HABAKKUK.

i.	6.	167.	iii.	7.	125.
ii.	17.	286.			

ZEPHANIAH.

ii.	9.	362.	iii.	10.	126.
-----	----	------	------	-----	------

ZECHARIAH.

ix.	2.	504.	xi.	1, 2.	296, 313.
ix.	3.	524.	xi.	11.	313.
ix.	5.	510.	xii.	11.	336, 458.
x.	1.	404.	xiv.	4.	322.
xi.	1.	604.	xiv.	18.	409.

MATTHEW.

ii.	6.	471.	ix.	1.	347, 489.
ii.	18.	461.	xi.	21.	487.
iv.	13.	489.	xi.	23.	489.
iv.	15.	486.	xiii.	8.	435.
iv.	25.	501, 502.	xiv.		502.
viii.	5.	489.	xvii.	24-27.	489.
viii.	28.	502.	xxiv.	20.	395.

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